

BLACKSBURG, VIRGINIA 24061

Final Report for Third Year of Work  
on  
A DEPOLARIZATION AND ATTENUATION EXPERIMENT  
USING THE COMSTAR AND CTS SATELLITES

Text by

C. W. Bostian  
S. M. Babula  
J. R. Dent  
R. E. Dombroski  
S. O. Lane  
E. A. Manus  
R. E. Marshall  
D. N. Meadows  
W. L. Stutzman  
P. H. Wiley

Computer Artwork and Programming by  
Peter Santago

Graphics by  
Cynthia Will

Electrical Engineering Department  
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University  
Blacksburg, Virginia 24061

Prepared for

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center  
Greenbelt, Maryland 20771

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This report summarizes attenuation and rain rate data collected during the 1978 calendar year on downlink paths from the CTS spacecraft (11.7 GHz) and the COMSTAR family of satellites (19.04 and 28.56 GHz). For information on the experimental hardware the reader should consult QUARTERLY TECHNICAL PROGRESS REPORT I ON A DEPOLARIZATION AND ATTENUATION EXPERIMENT USING THE COMSTAR AND CTS SATELLITES by C. W. Bostian, S. B. Holt, S. R. Kauffman, E. A. Manus, R. E. Marshall, W. P. Overstreet, R. R. Persinger, W. L. Stutzman, and P. H. Wiley, dated December 22, 1976. Details on the data reduction procedure used are contained in FINAL REPORT (SECOND YEAR OF WORK) ON A DEPOLARIZATION AND ATTENUATION EXPERIMENT USING THE COMSTAR AND CTS SATELLITES by C. W. Bostian, S. R. Kauffman, E. A. Manus, R. E. Marshall, W. P. Overstreet, R. R. Persinger, W. L. Stutzman, and P. H. Wiley, dated February 9, 1978. Both reports were submitted for Contract NAS5-22577.

All 11.7 GHz data presented were taken with the CTS spacecraft at a nominal elevation angle of 33 degrees. The 19.04 GHz data for January through August were taken from COMSTAR D-2 at 44 degrees elevation; D-2 was turned off at the end of August and subsequent data were collected with D-3 at 46 degrees elevation. Because of problems with the D-2 spacecraft, the 28.56 data came from three satellites: D-2 (44 degrees elevation) for January through mid June, D-1 (24.5 degrees elevation) for part of July and August, and D-3 (46 degrees elevation) after September 1.

## 2. ATTENUATION AND RAINRATE STATISTICS

### 2.1 Introduction

The data which follow are for rain only. Because of inherent problems in handling snow events (antennas fill with snow, rain gauges freeze, etc.), snow data have been excluded from the data base reported here. While snow fell in January, February, March, April, and November, the time excluded was a significant fraction of a month only in January.

Table 2.1-1 summarizes the data collected for each month of 1978. The top row lists the hours of rain; the other rows give the number of rain hours for which signal data were processed for this report. Most of the differences in rain time and signal time are small and result from ground equipment down time or spacecraft interruptions. March is an exception because about seven hours of the observed rain was mixed with snow.



Table 2.1-1. Summary of 1978 Operations. The numbers indicate the hours of rain data and hours of useful signal data during rain for each month. Both are calculated to the nearest integer hour.

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Total
Hours of Rain	16	0	24	4	6	9	6	5	1	3	11	28	113
11.7 Co	16	0	17	4	6	9	6	4	1	1	11	20	95
11.7 X	16	0	17	3	5	9	6	5	1	1	11	19	93
19.04V Co	16	0	7	0	2	6	6	5	0	3	11	28	84
19.04V X	16	0	6	0	1	4	6	4	0	3	11	28	79
19.04H Co	16	0	6	0	2	6	6	5	0	3	11	28	83
19.04H X	15	0	6	0	1	4	6	4	0	3	10	25	74
28.56 Co	16	0	17	4	5	5	0	5	1	3	10	28	94
28.56 X	16	0	17	3	5	5	0	5	1	3	10	27	92

## 2.2 Monthly Exceedence Plots

The figures which follow present percent-of-time data for attenuation and rain rate during each month of the calendar year. Several comments on these are in order.

1. No rain fell in February. Therefore no rain rate plot is presented and the signal statistics represent fades caused by orbital motion, ice, or snow somewhere in the propagation paths.
2. The 19.04 GHz data shown for April and September are estimated from data collected on the 28 GHz downlink.
3. The 28.56 GHz data for July and August are for the D-1 spacecraft at a low (24.5 degrees) elevation angle. Some of these in July are estimated from 19.04 GHz data.
4. The January percent-of-time plots represent only the two short time periods during the month when rain - rather than snow - fell. These extended from about 0000 (UT) on January 8 until 0600 on January 9 and from 1800 on January 25 until 1000 on January 26. The two periods were combined to form the data base for January. All of the other monthly data reported are for full calendar months except for July where the timebase begins on July 2.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR JANUARY 1978

PERCENT OF TIME RAIN RATE IS EXCEEDED

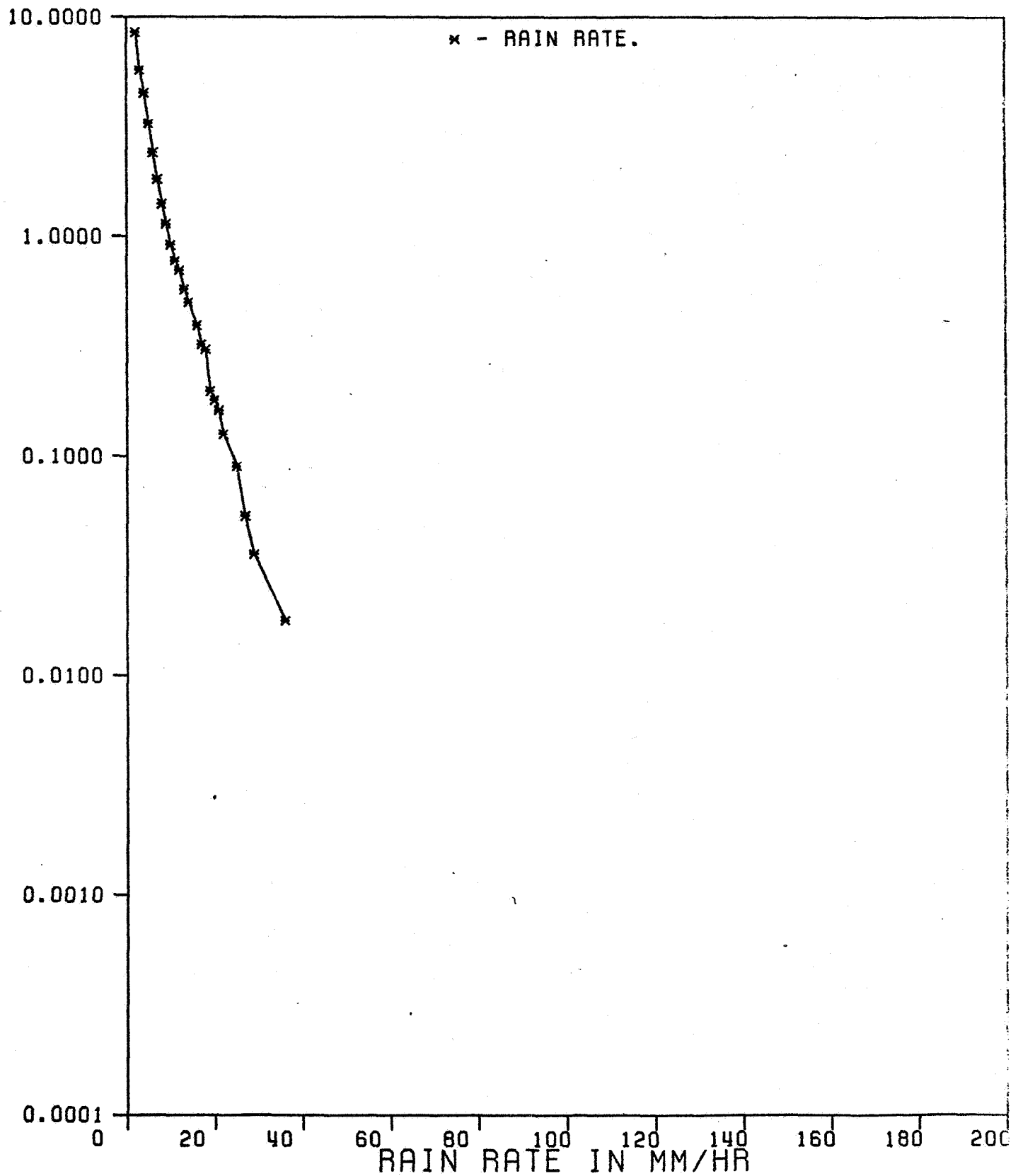


Figure 2.2-1. Rain rate percent of time data for January, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR JANUARY 1978

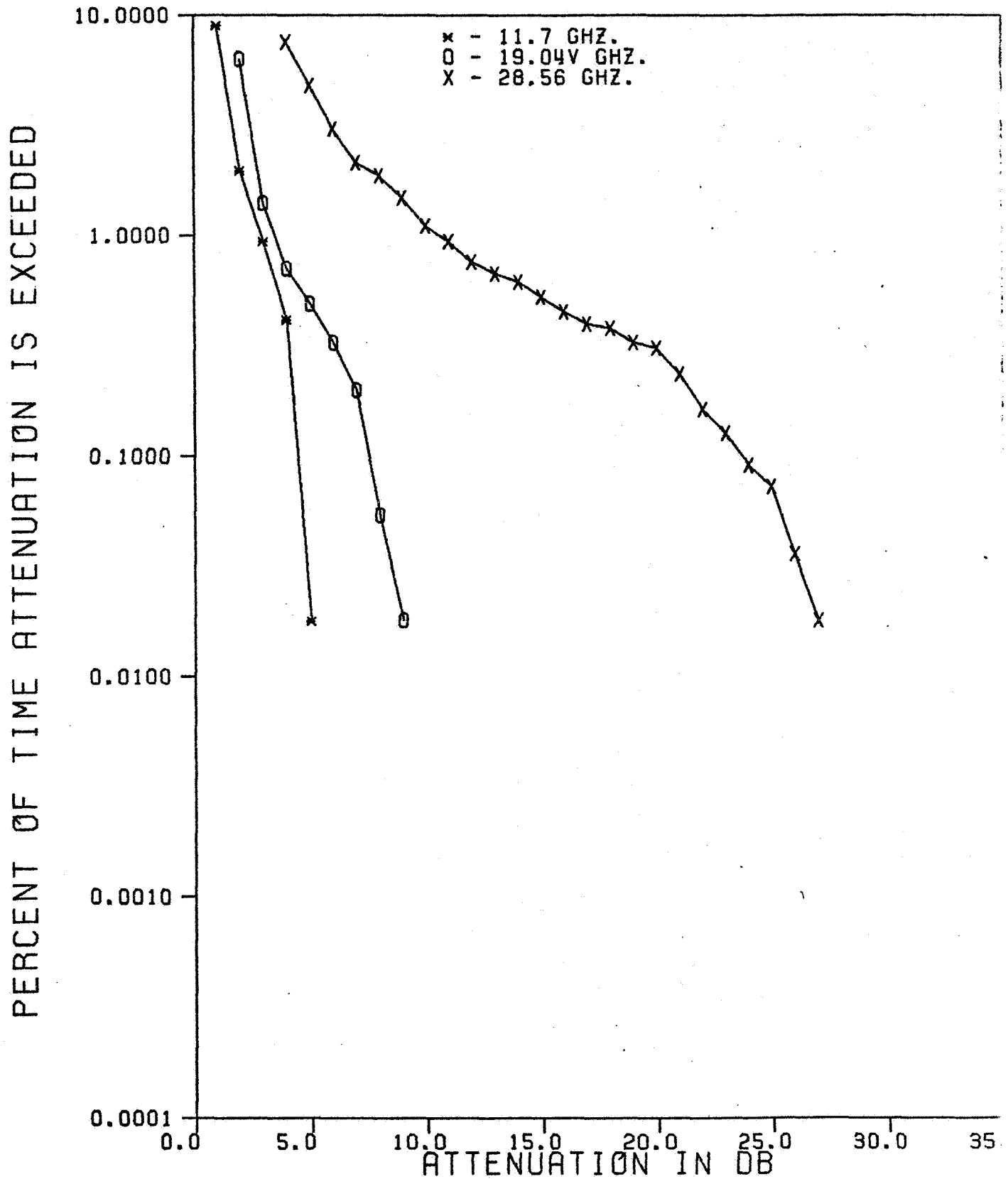


Figure 2.2-2. Attenuation percent of time data for January, 1978.

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VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
ATTENUATION DATA FOR FEBRUARY 1978

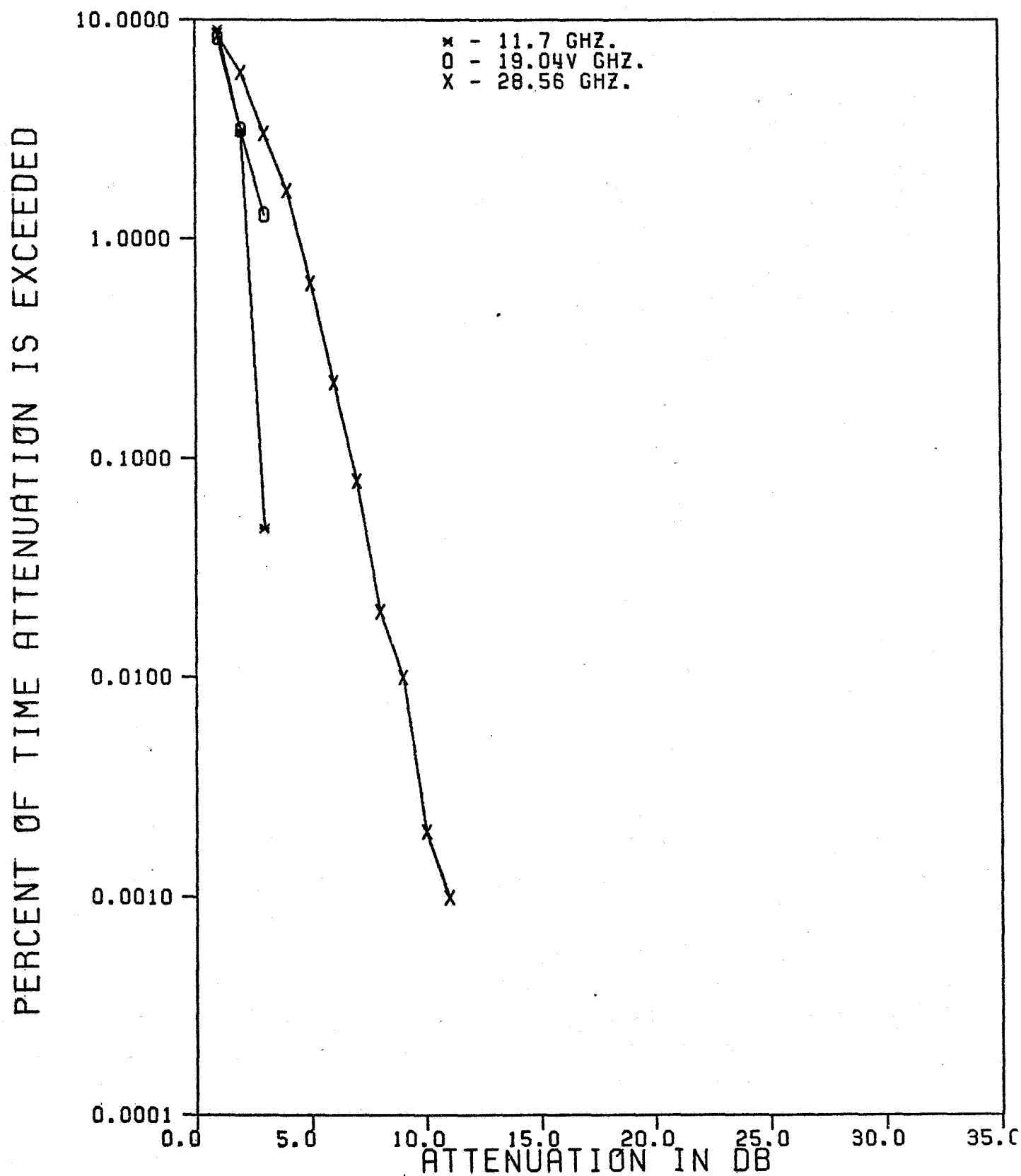


Figure 2.2-3. Attenuation percent of time data for February, 1978.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR MARCH 1978

PERCENT OF TIME RAIN RATE IS EXCEEDED

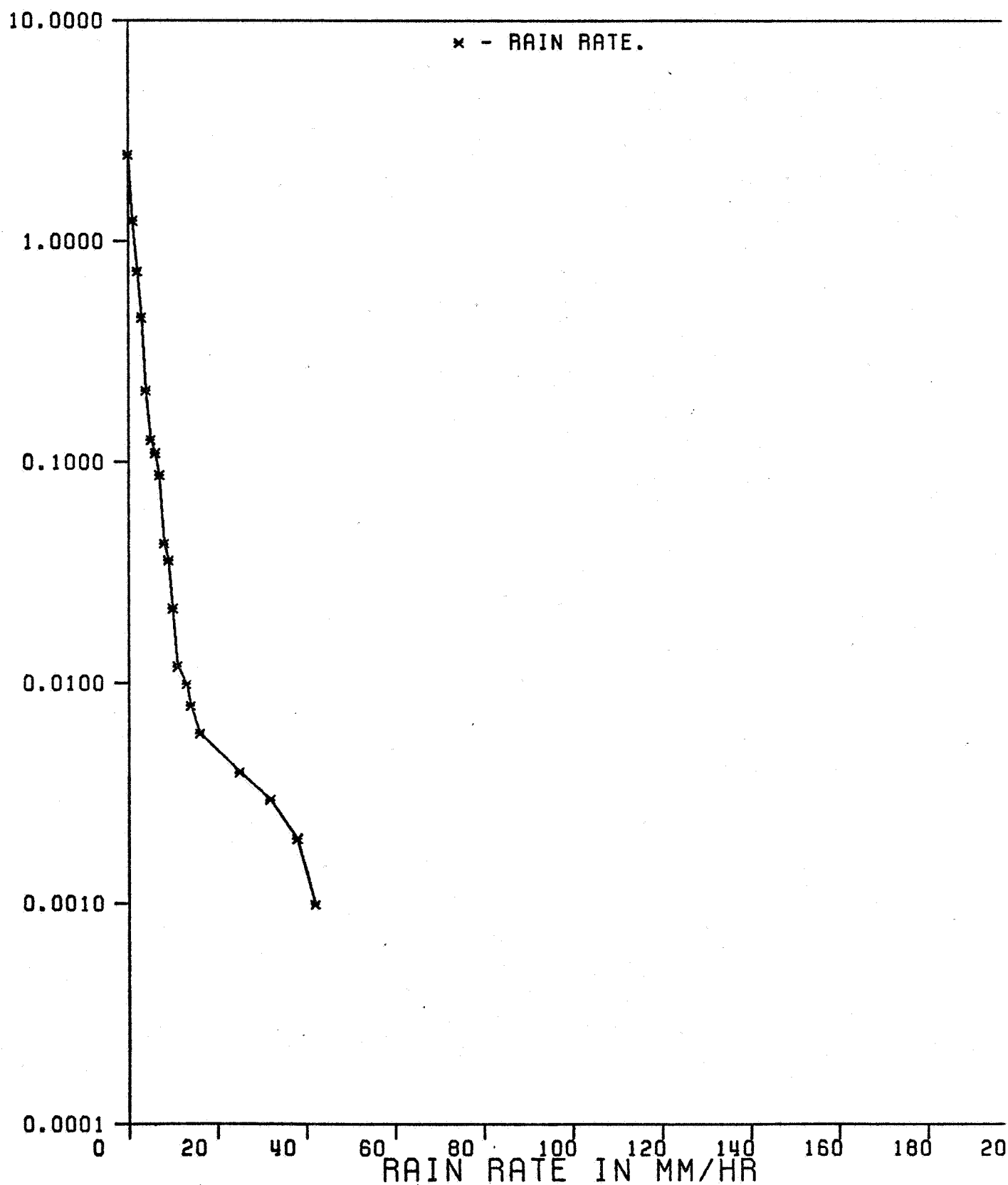


Figure 2.2-4. Rain rate percent of time data for March, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR MARCH 1978

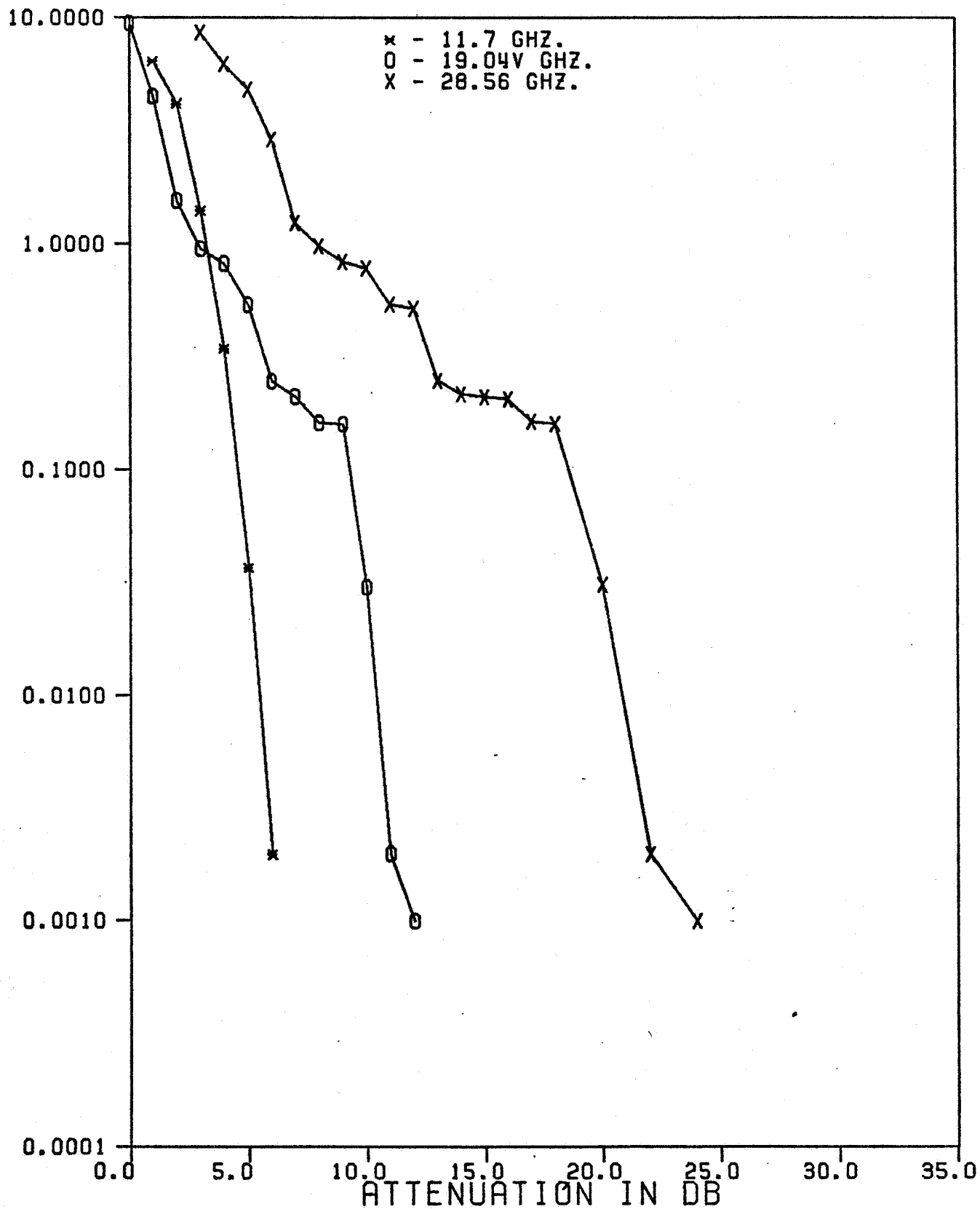


Figure 2.2-5. Attenuation percent of time data for March, 1978.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR APRIL 1978

PERCENT OF TIME RAIN RATE IS EXCEEDED

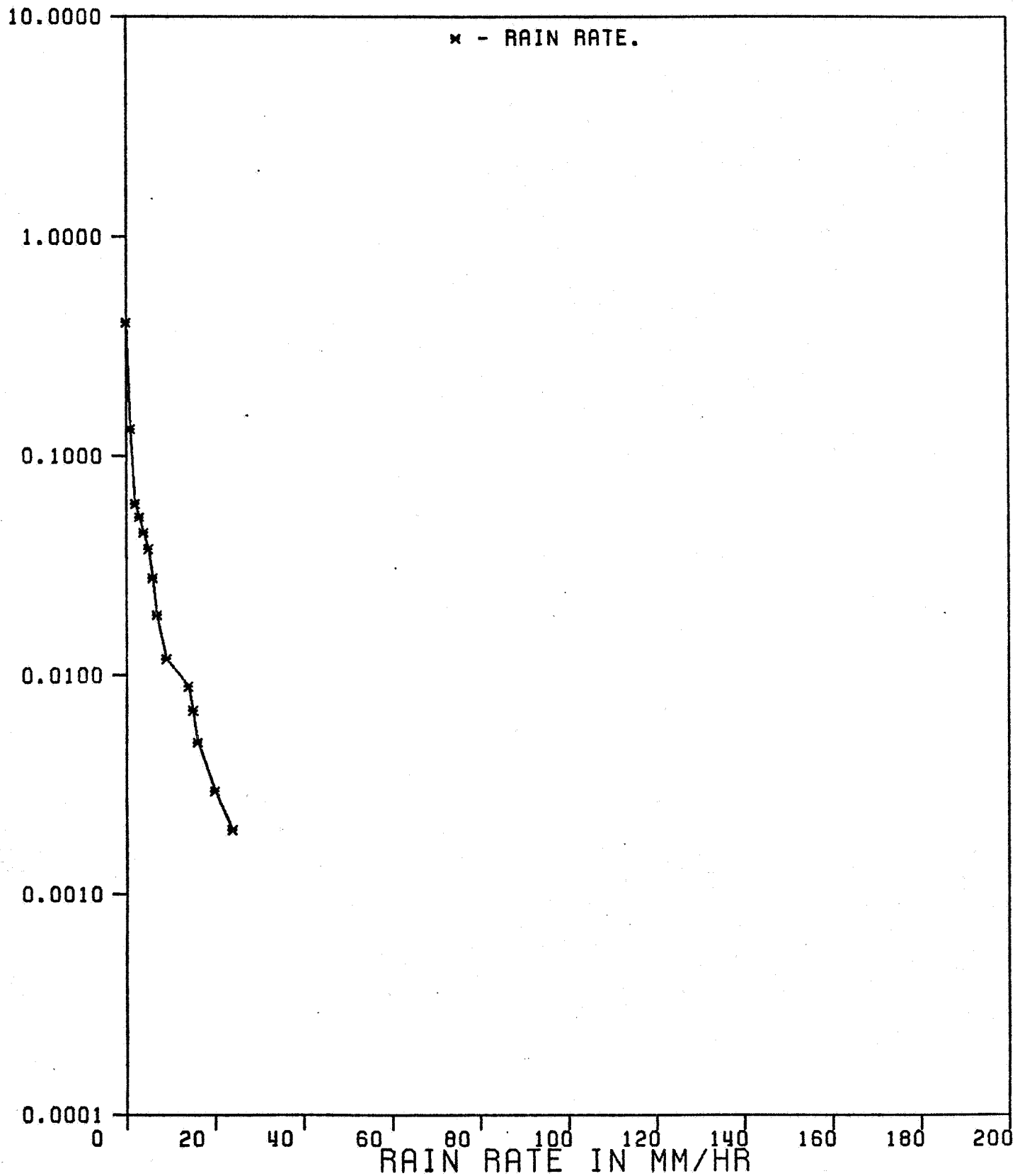


Figure 2.2-6. Rain rate percent of time data for April, 1978.



# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR APRIL 1978

PERCENT OF TIME ATTENUATION IS EXCEEDED

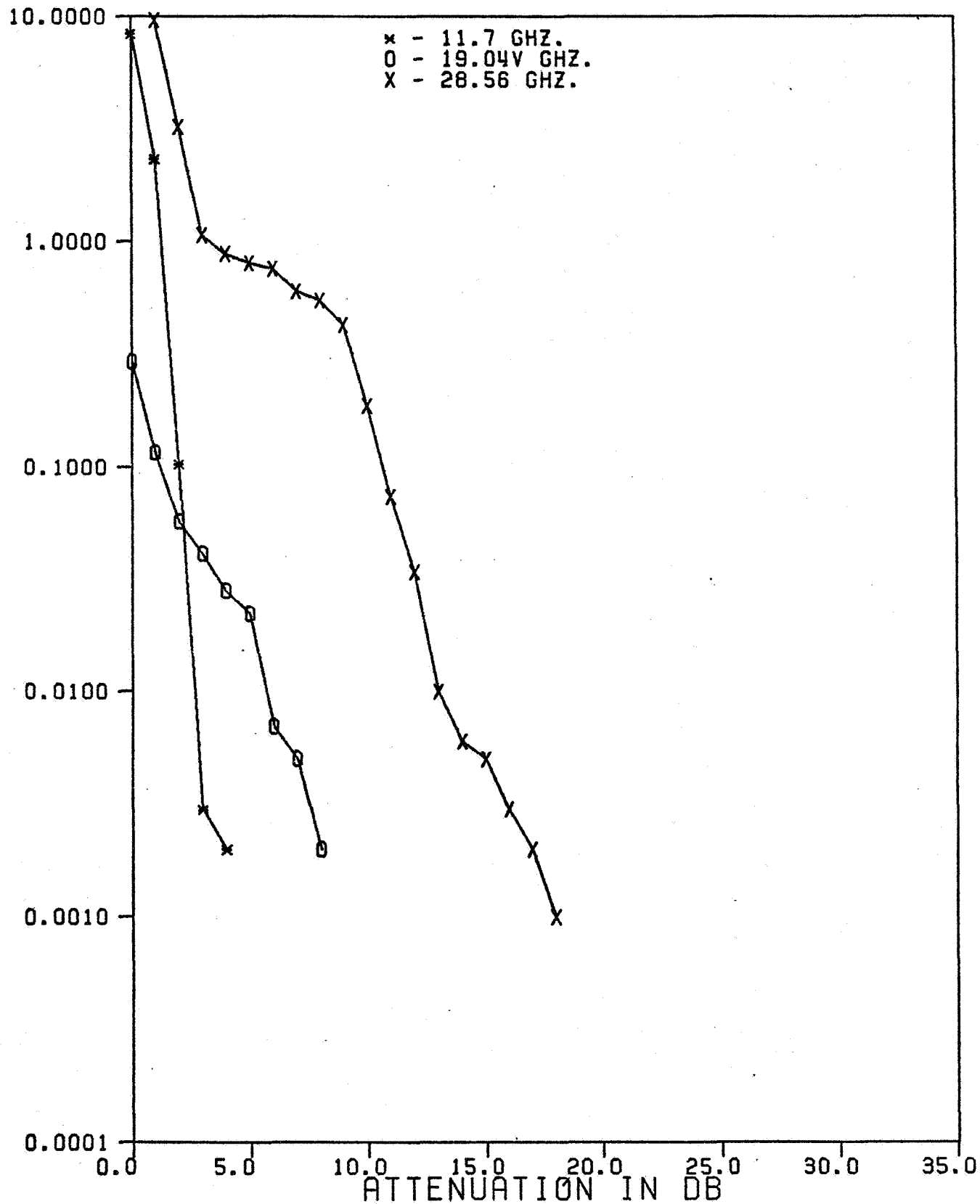


Figure 2.2-7. Attenuation percent of time data for April, 1978.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR MAY 1978

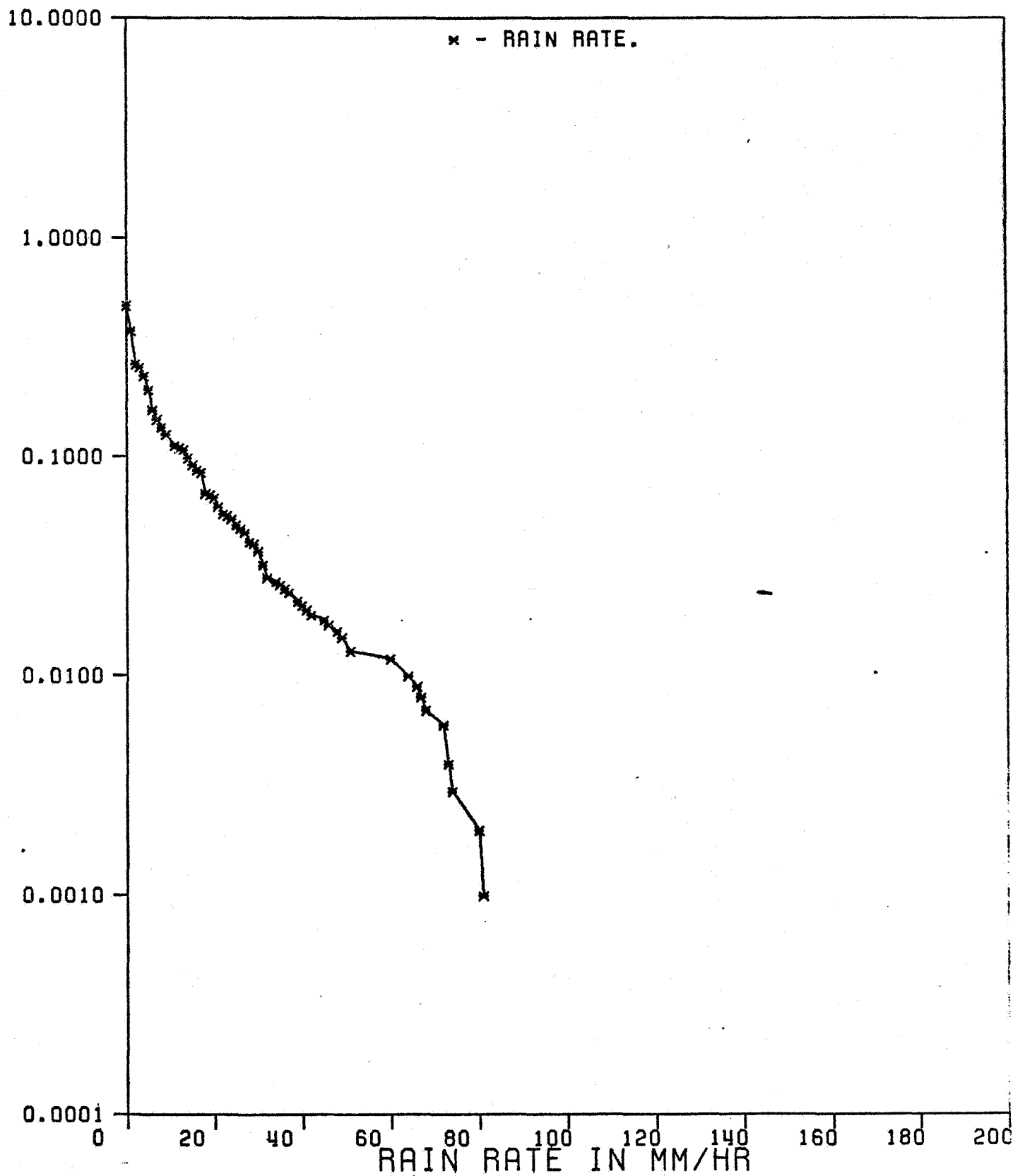


Figure 2.2-8. Rain rate percent of time data for May, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR MAY 1978

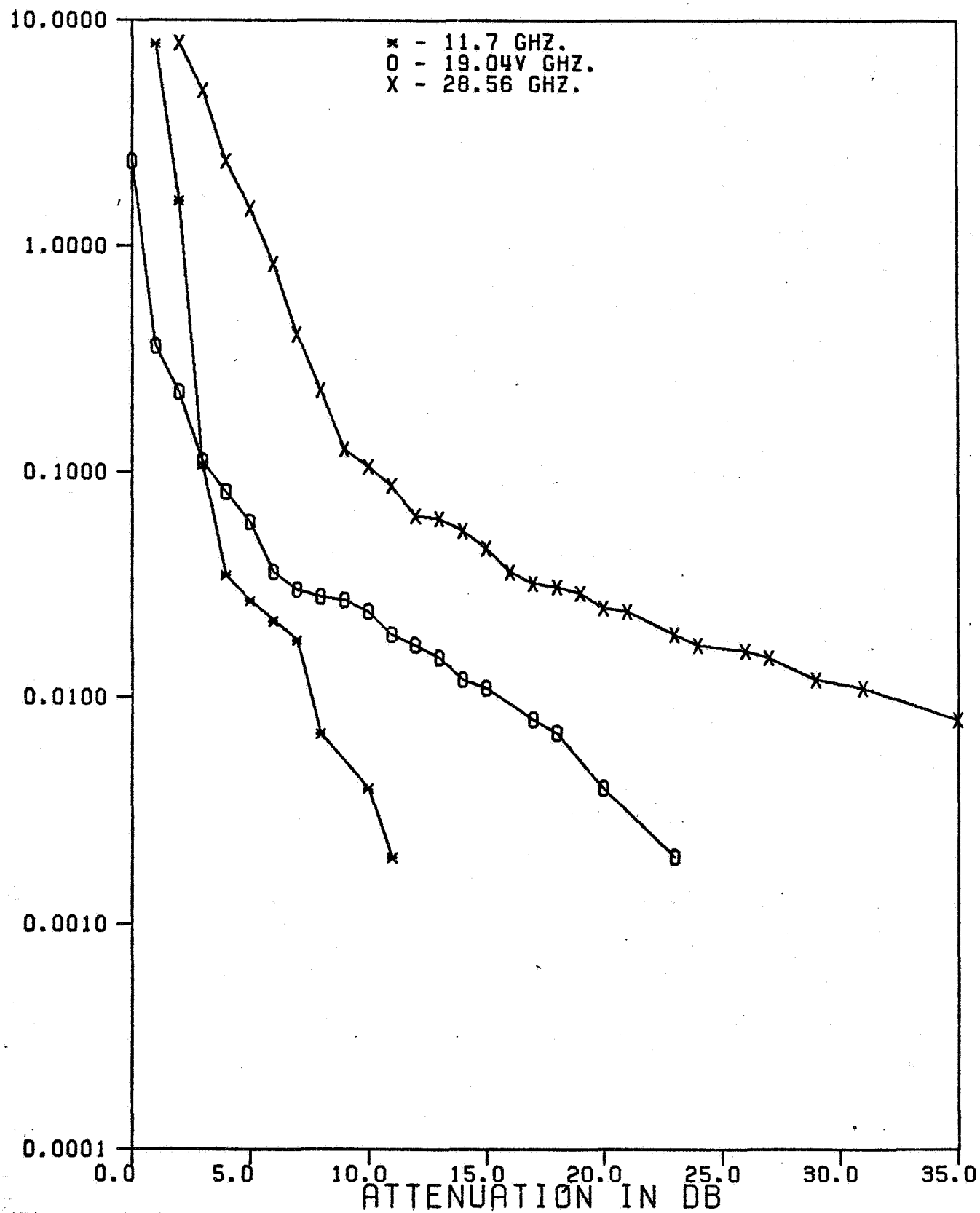


Figure 2.2-9. Attenuation percent of time data for May, 1978.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR JUNE 1978

PERCENT OF TIME RAIN RATE IS EXCEEDED

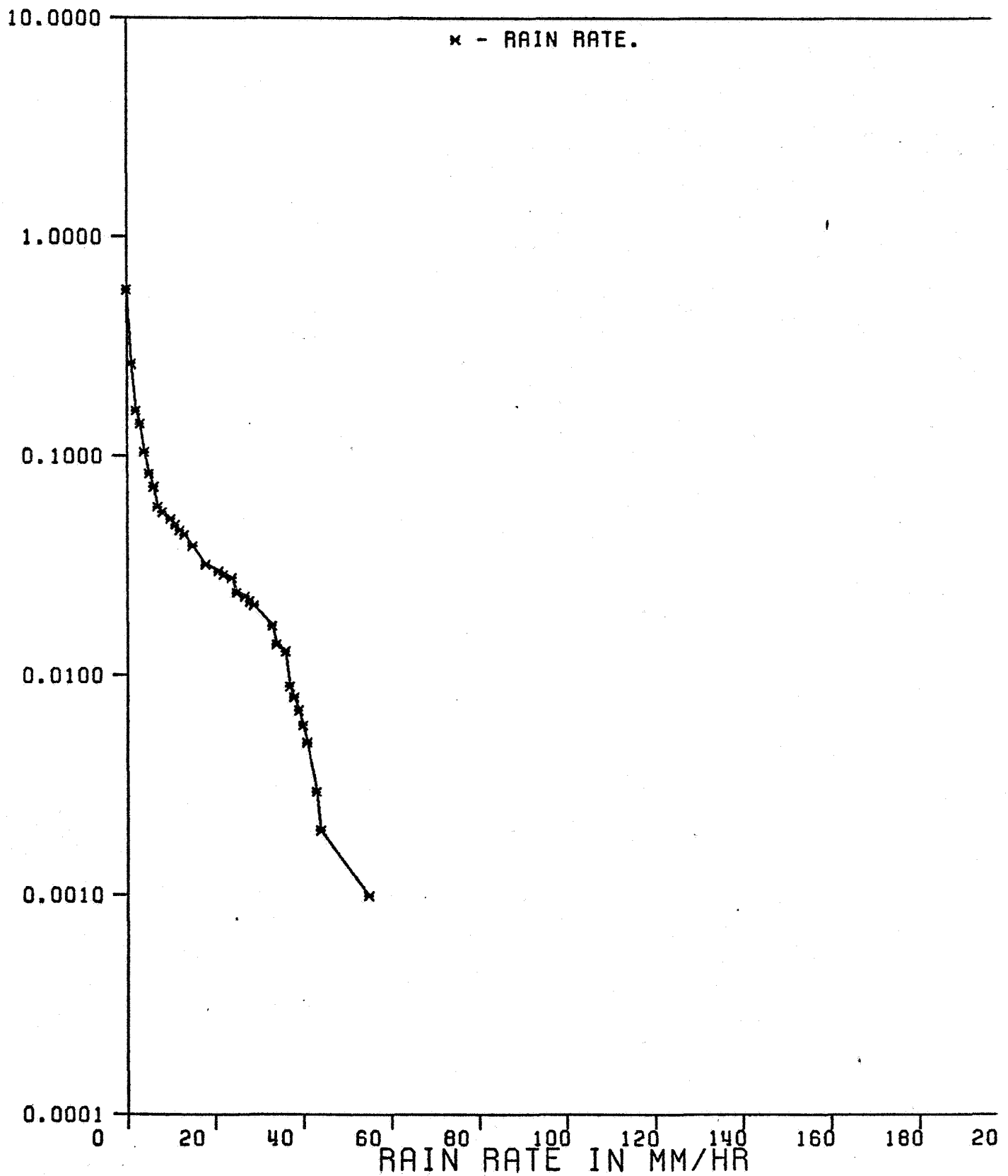


Figure 2.2-10. Rain rate percent of time data for June, 1978.

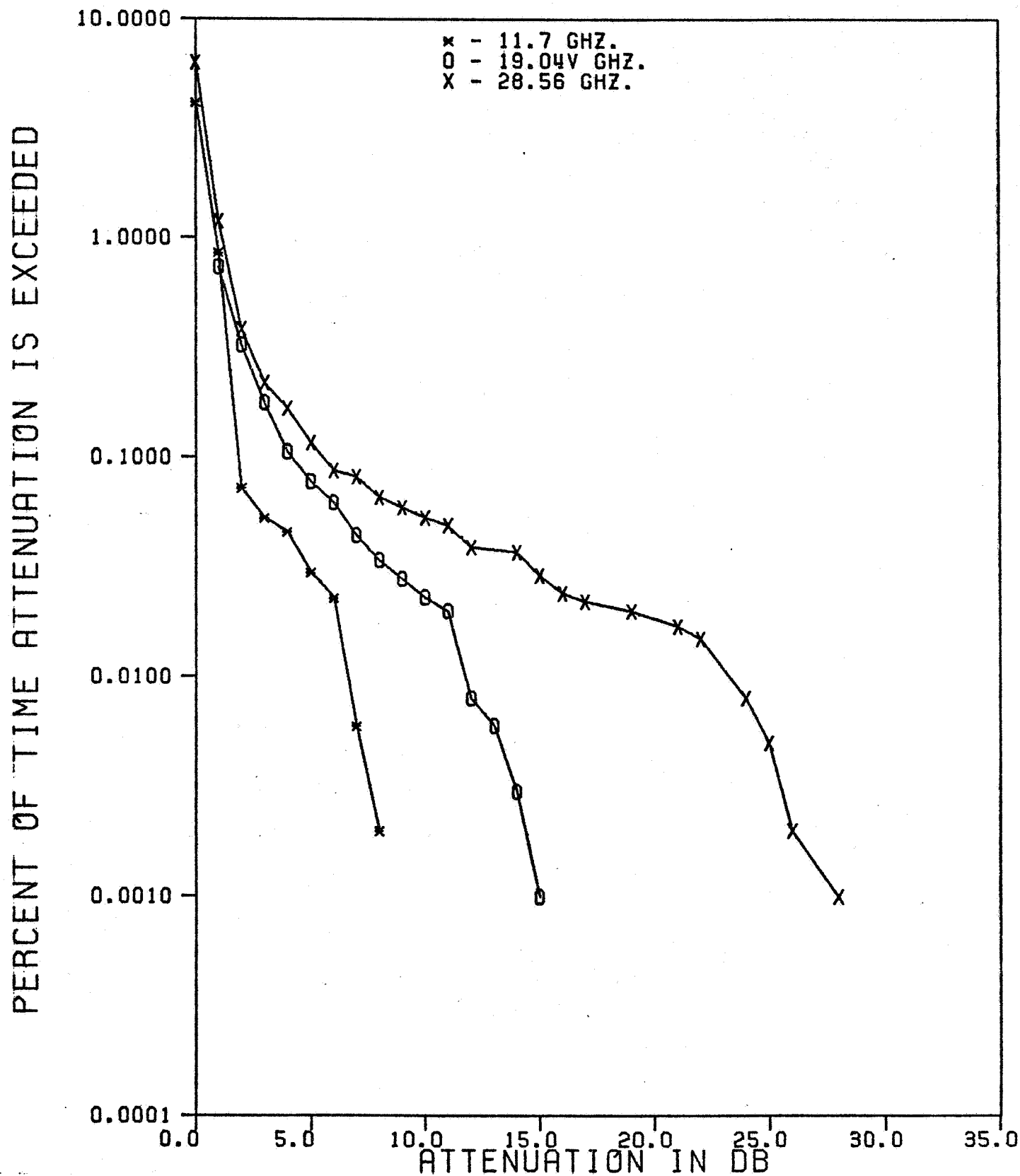
VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
ATTENUATION DATA FOR JUNE 1978

Figure 2.2-11. Attenuation percent of time data for June, 1978.

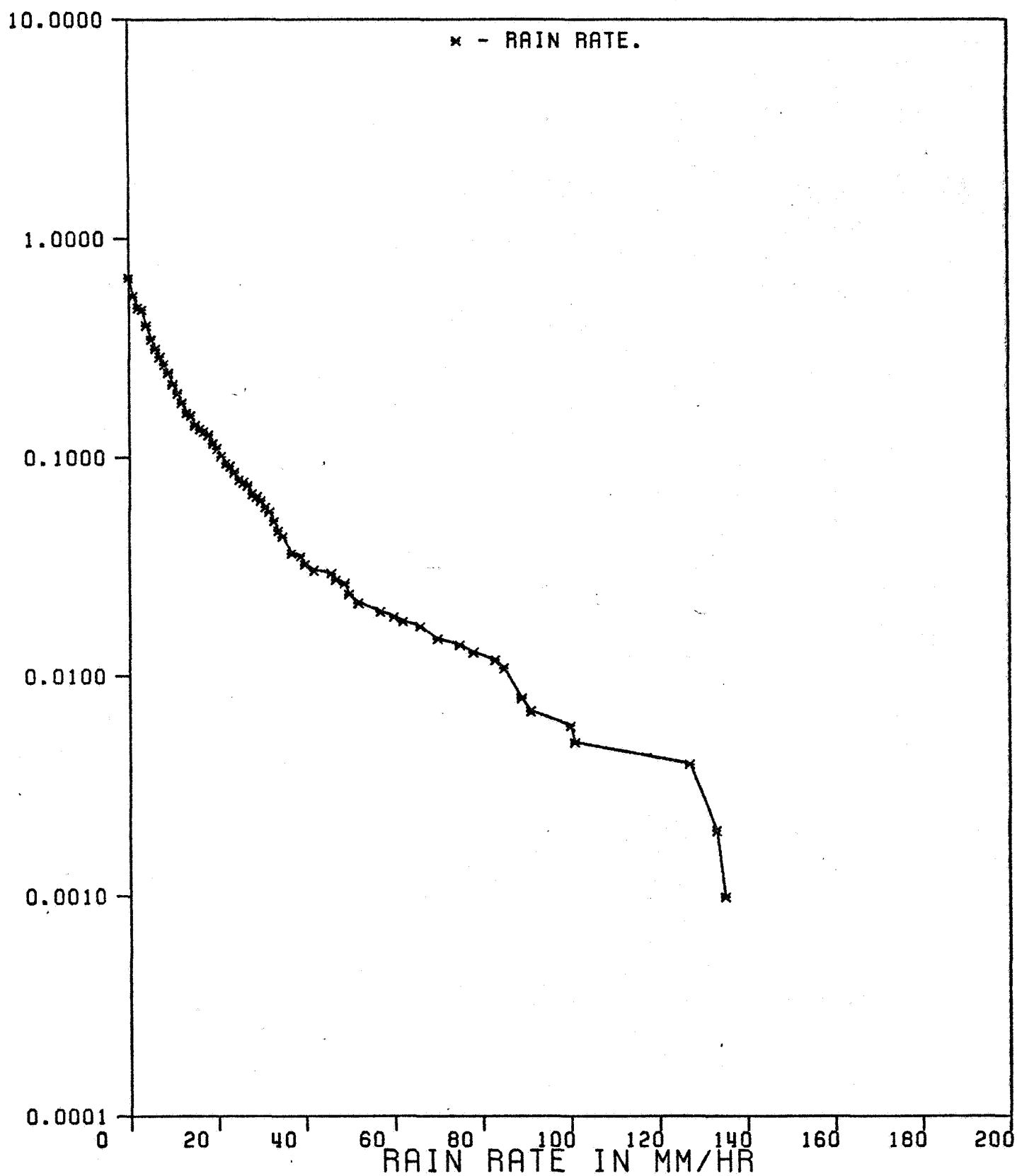
VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR JULY 1978

Figure 2.2-12. Rain rate percent of time data for July, 1978.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
ATTENUATION DATA FOR JULY 1978

PERCENT OF TIME ATTENUATION IS EXCEEDED

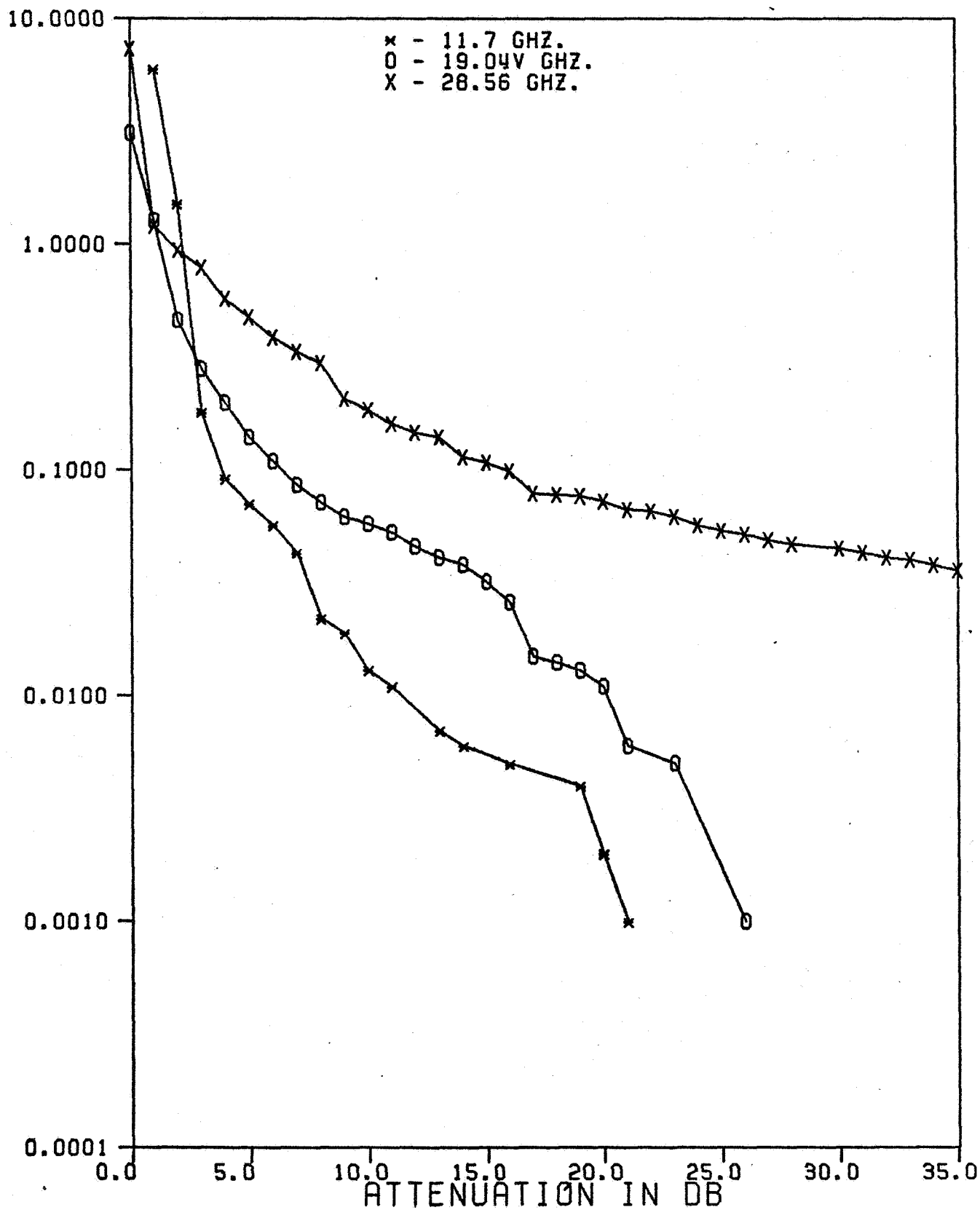


Figure 2.2-13. Attenuation percent of time data for July, 1978.

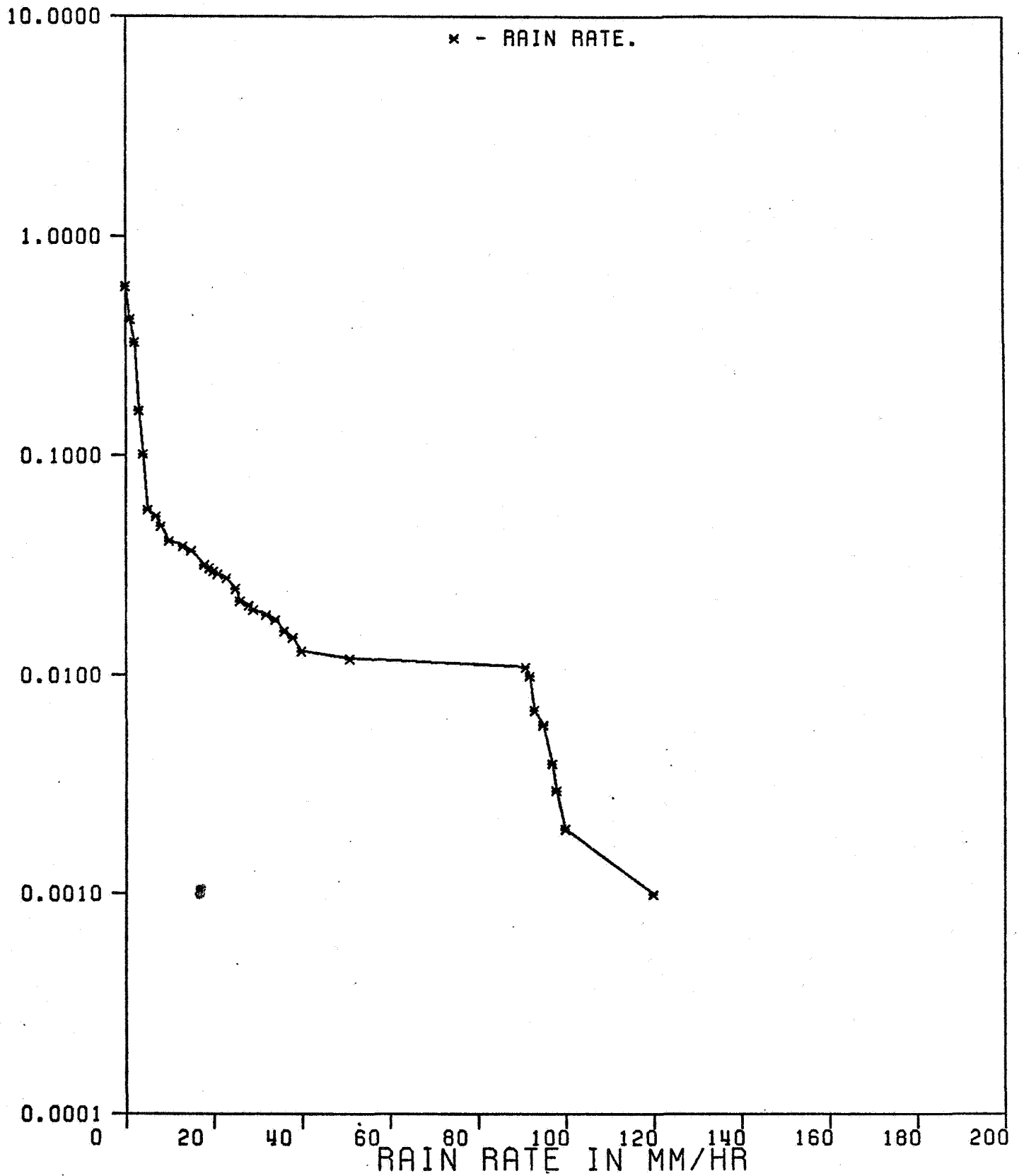
VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR AUGUST 1978

Figure 2.2-14. Rain rate percent of time data for August, 1978.



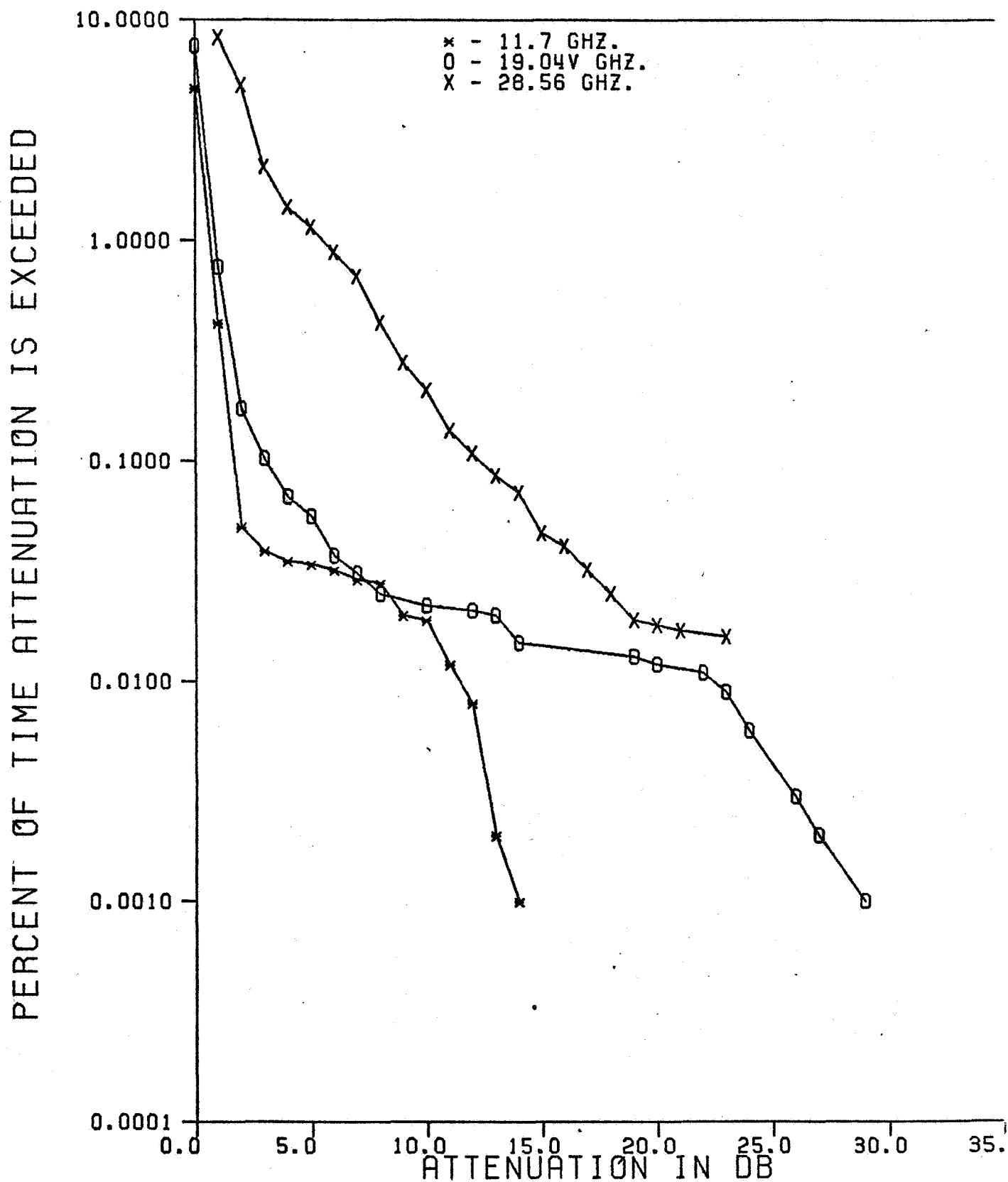
VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
ATTENUATION DATA FOR AUGUST 1978

Figure 2.2-15. Attenuation percent of time data for August, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP RAIN DATA FOR SEPTEMBER 1978

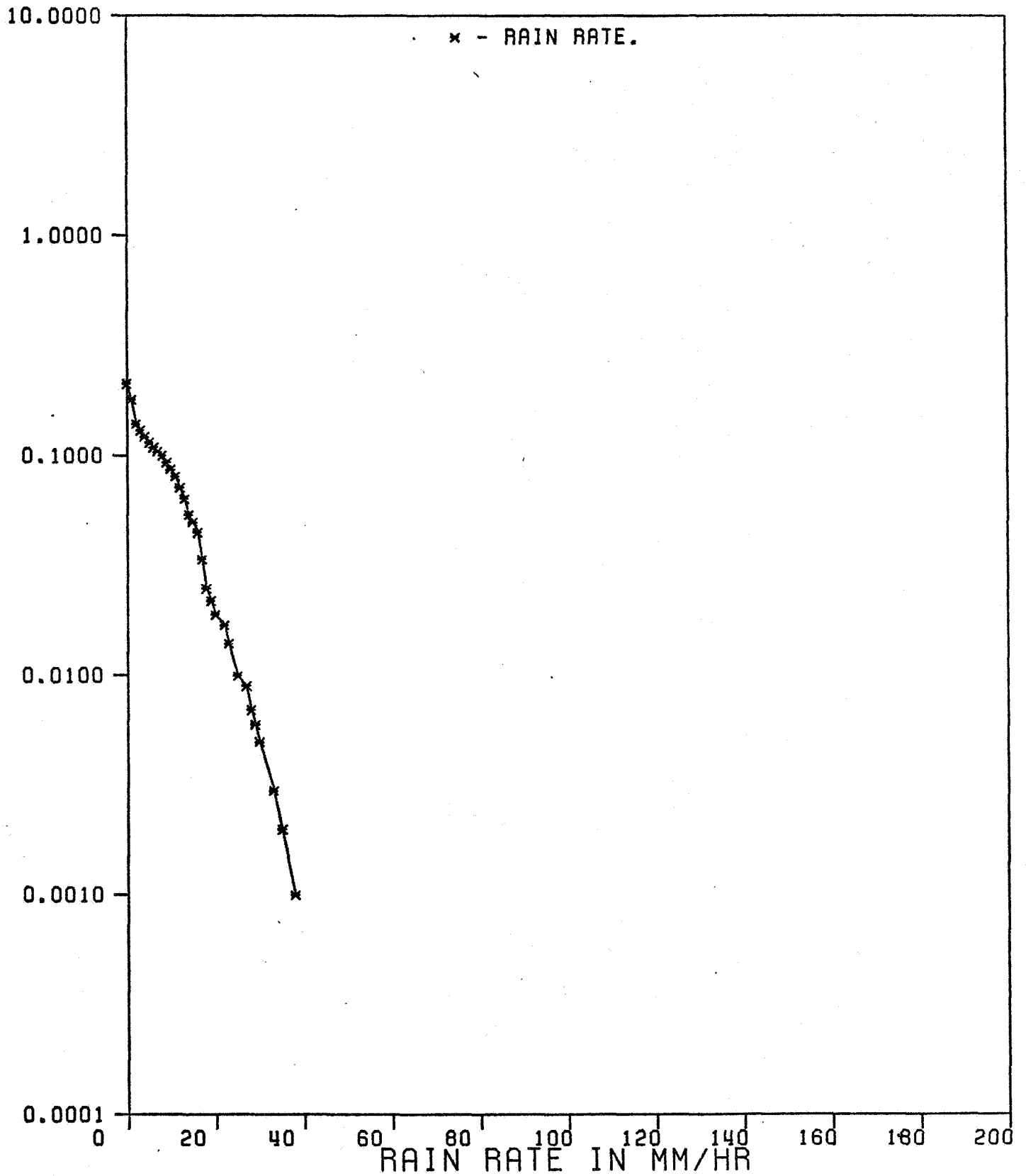


Figure 2.2-16. Rain rate percent of time data for September, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR SEPTEMBER 1978

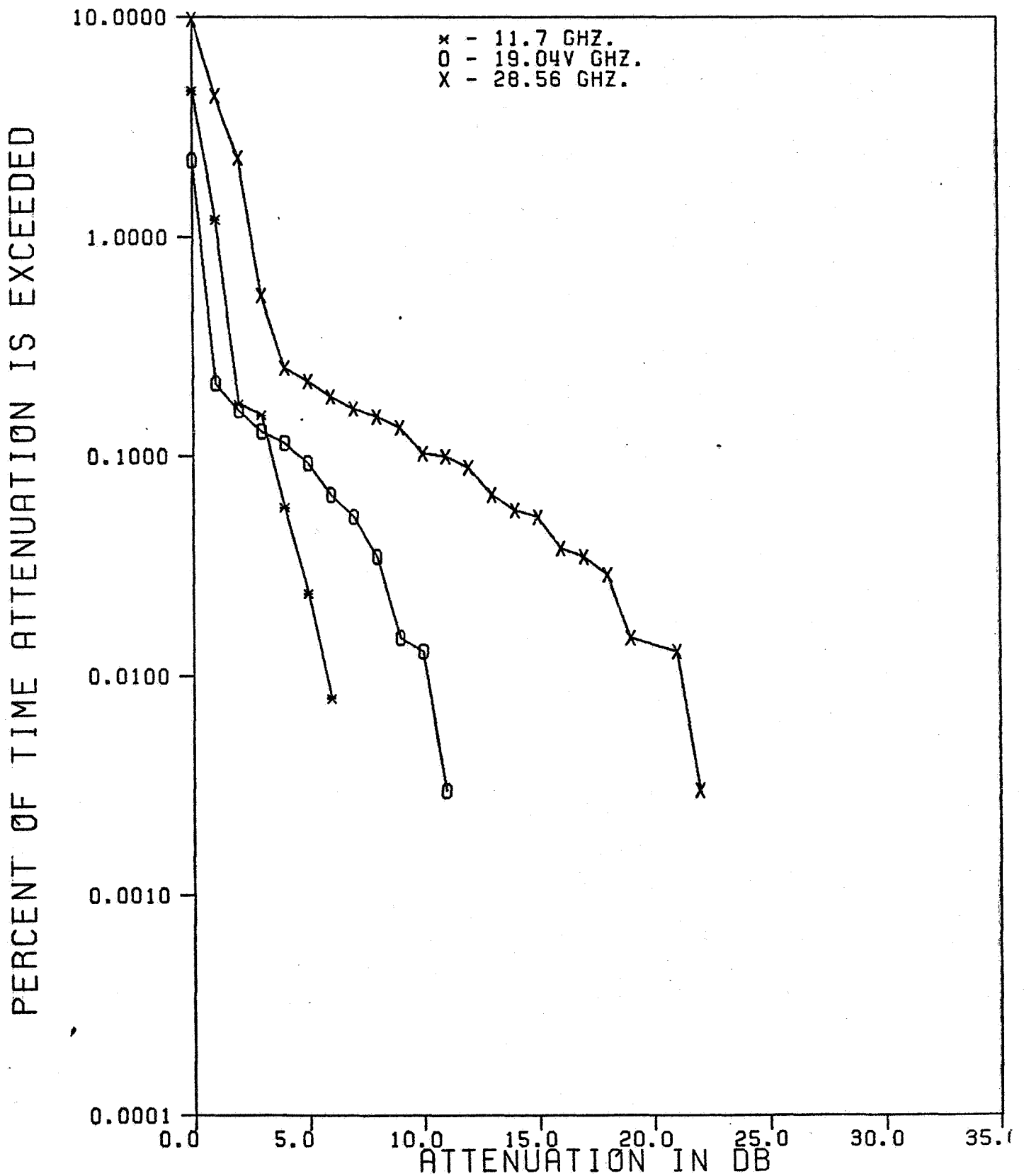


Figure 2.2-17. Attenuation percent of time data for September, 1978.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR OCTOBER 1978

PERCENT OF TIME RAIN RATE IS EXCEEDED

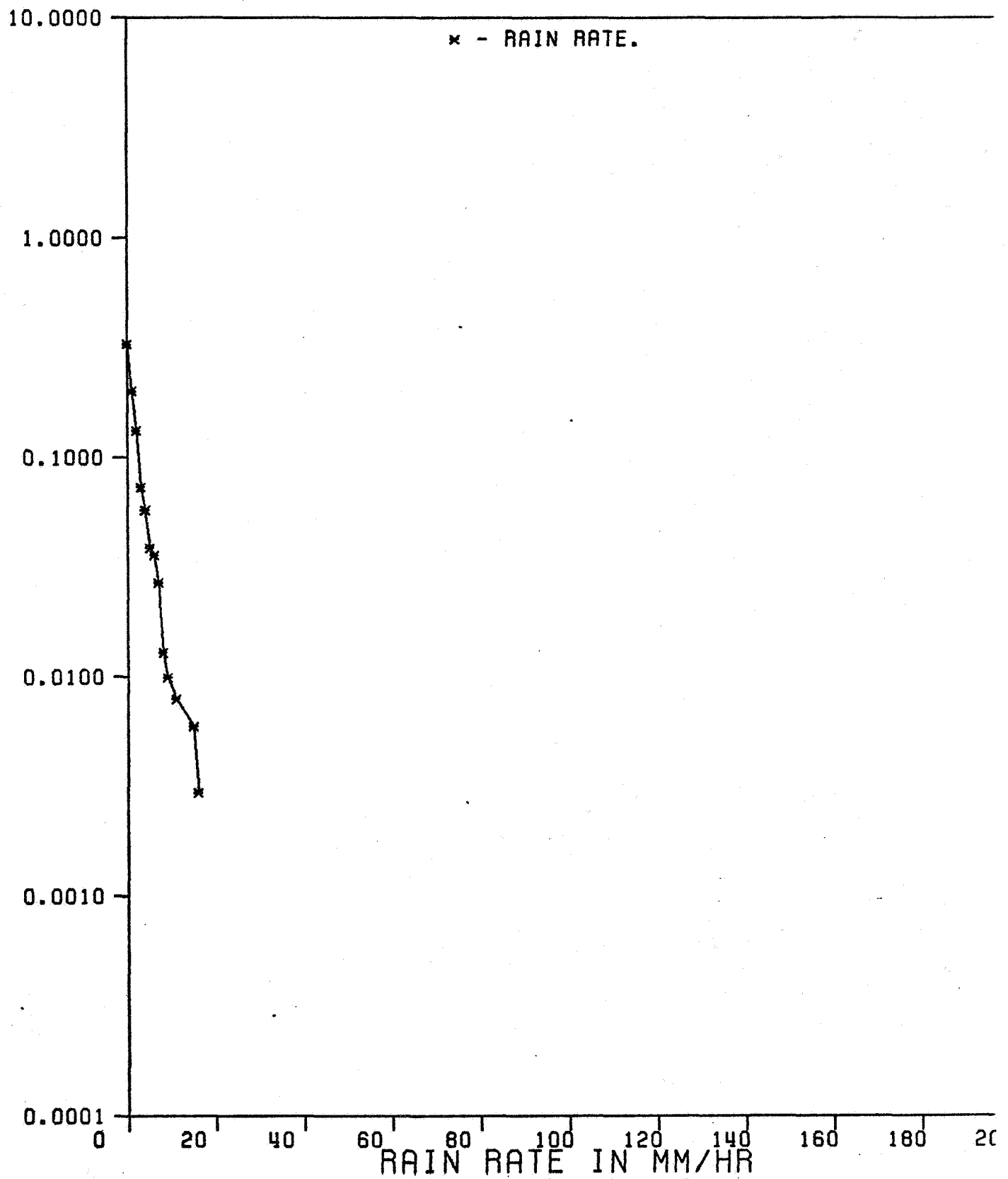


Figure 2.2-18. Rain rate percent of time data for October, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR OCTOBER 1978

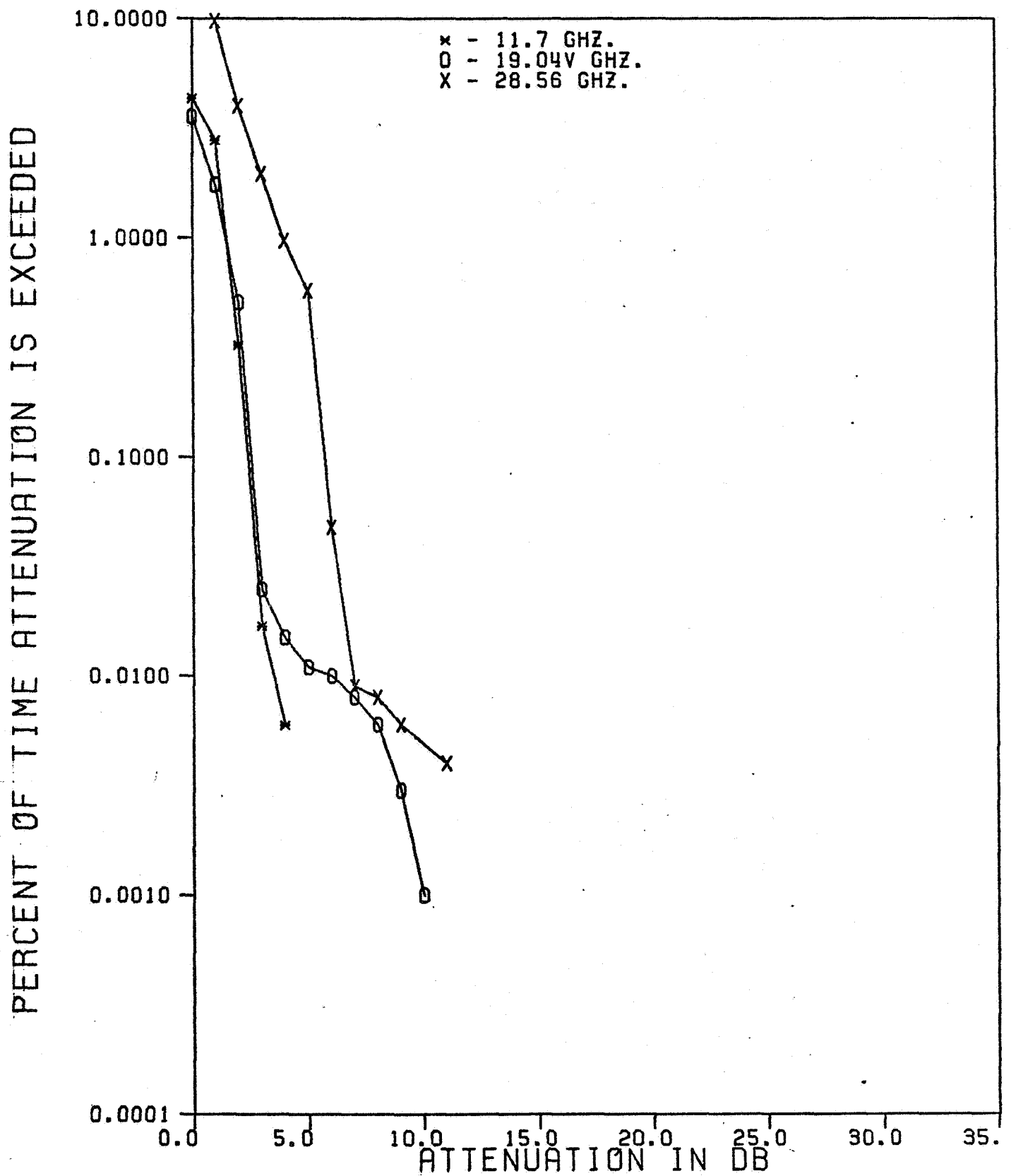


Figure 2.2-19. Attenuation percent of time data for October, 1978.

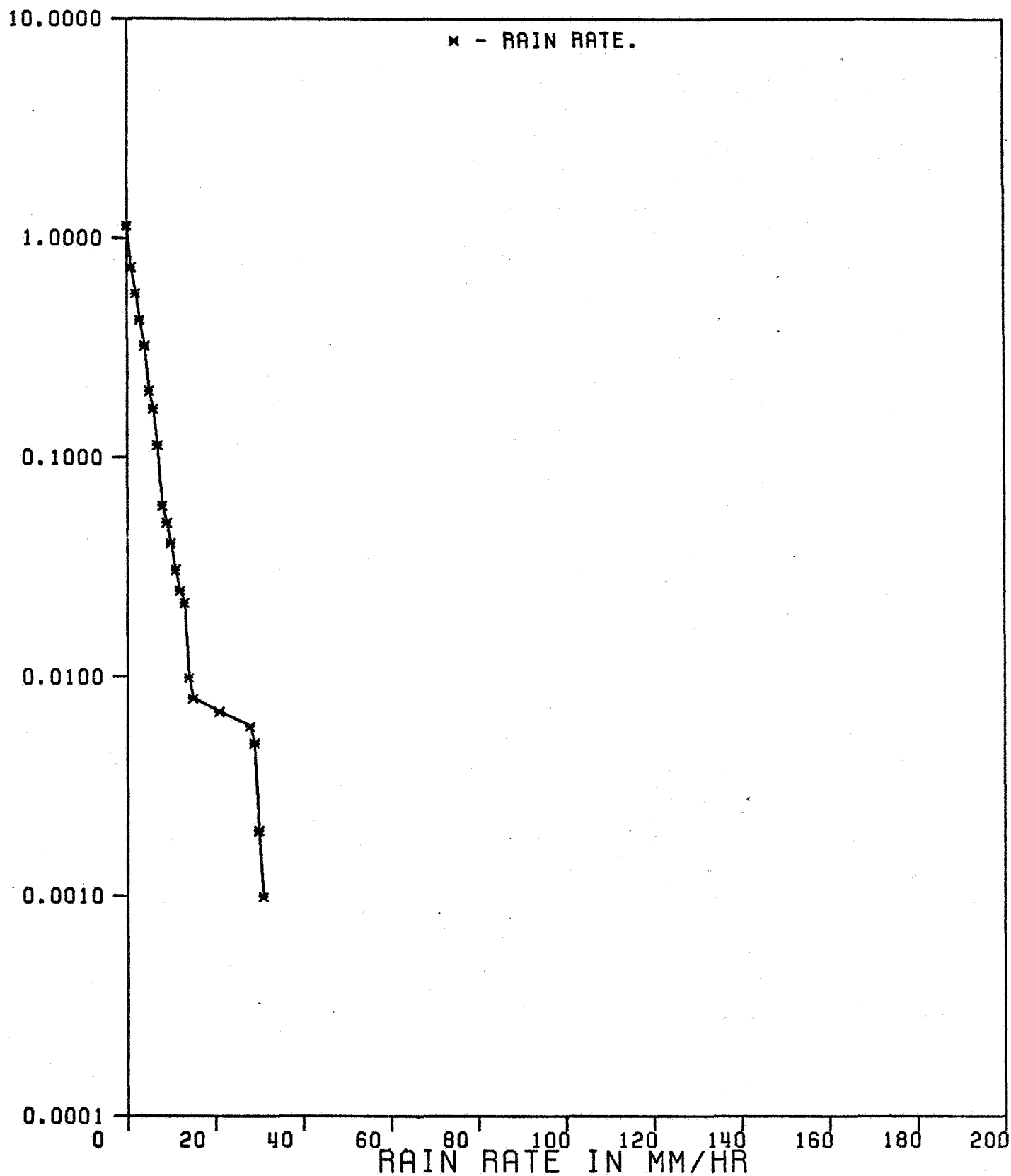
VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR NOVEMBER 1978

Figure 2.2-20. Rain rate percent of time data for November, 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR NOVEMBER 1978

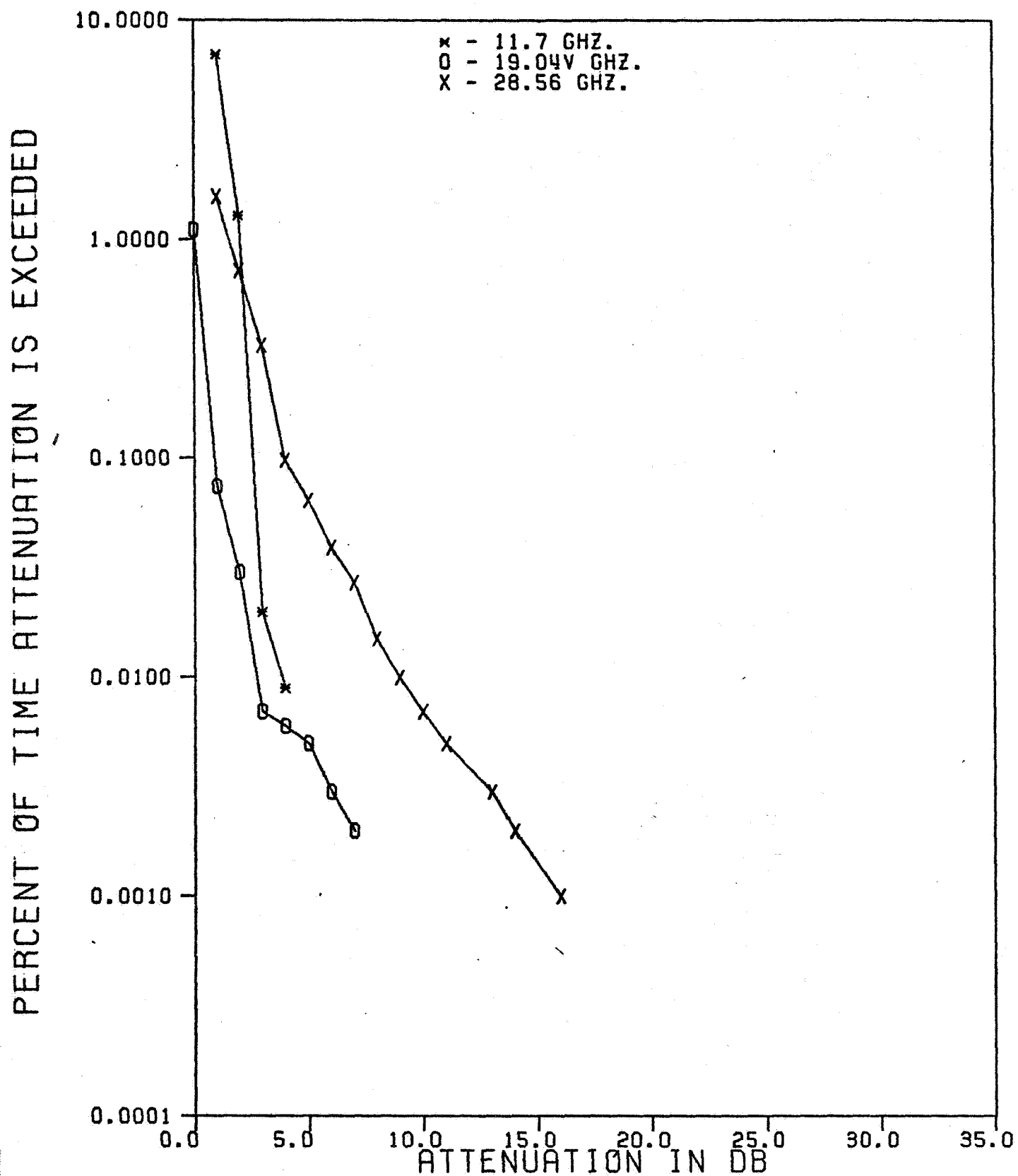


Figure 2.2-21. Attenuation percent of time data for November, 1978.

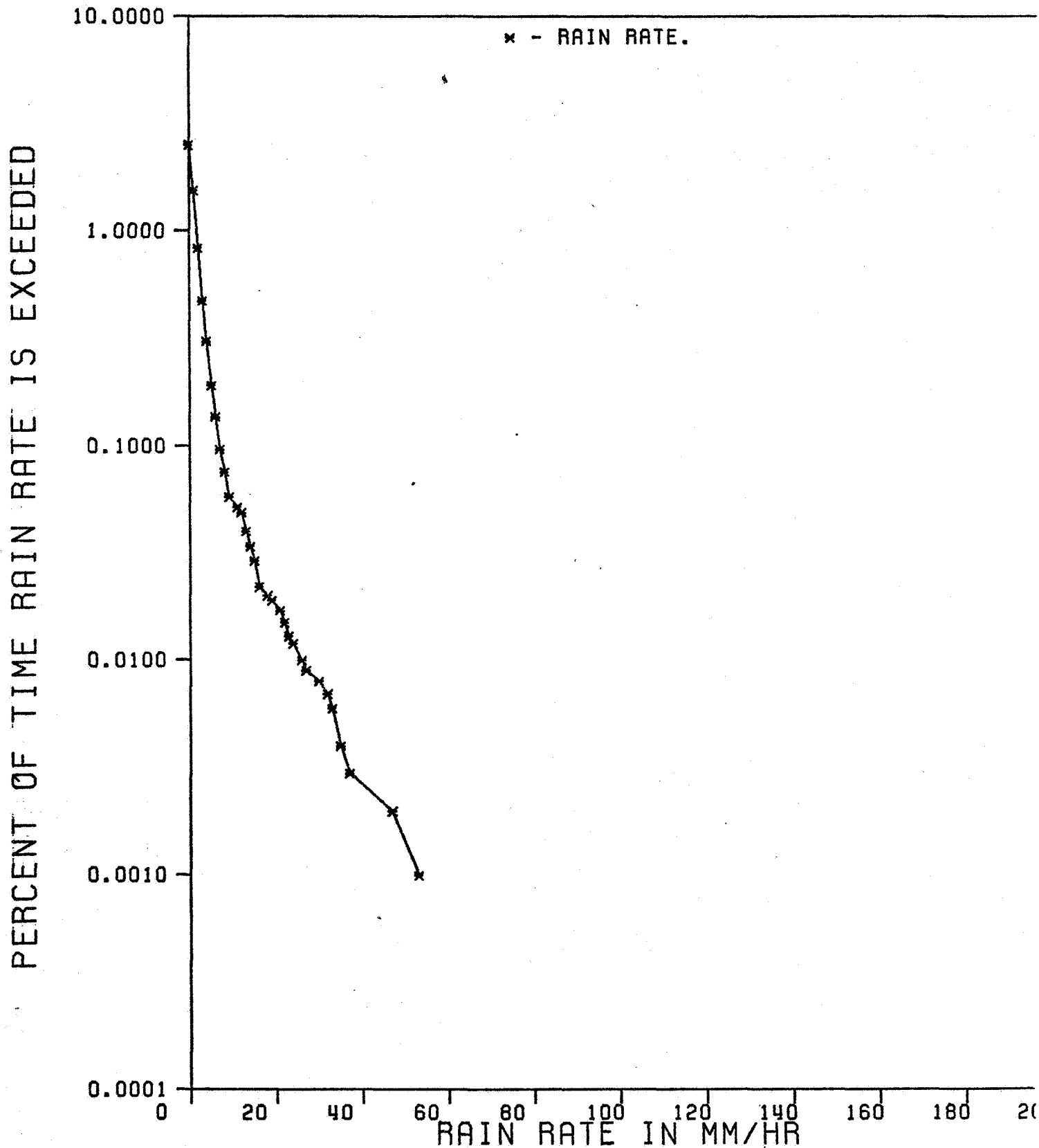
VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR DECEMBER 1978

Figure 2.2-22. Rain rate percent of time data for December, 1978.



# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR DECEMBER 1978

PERCENT OF TIME ATTENUATION IS EXCEEDED

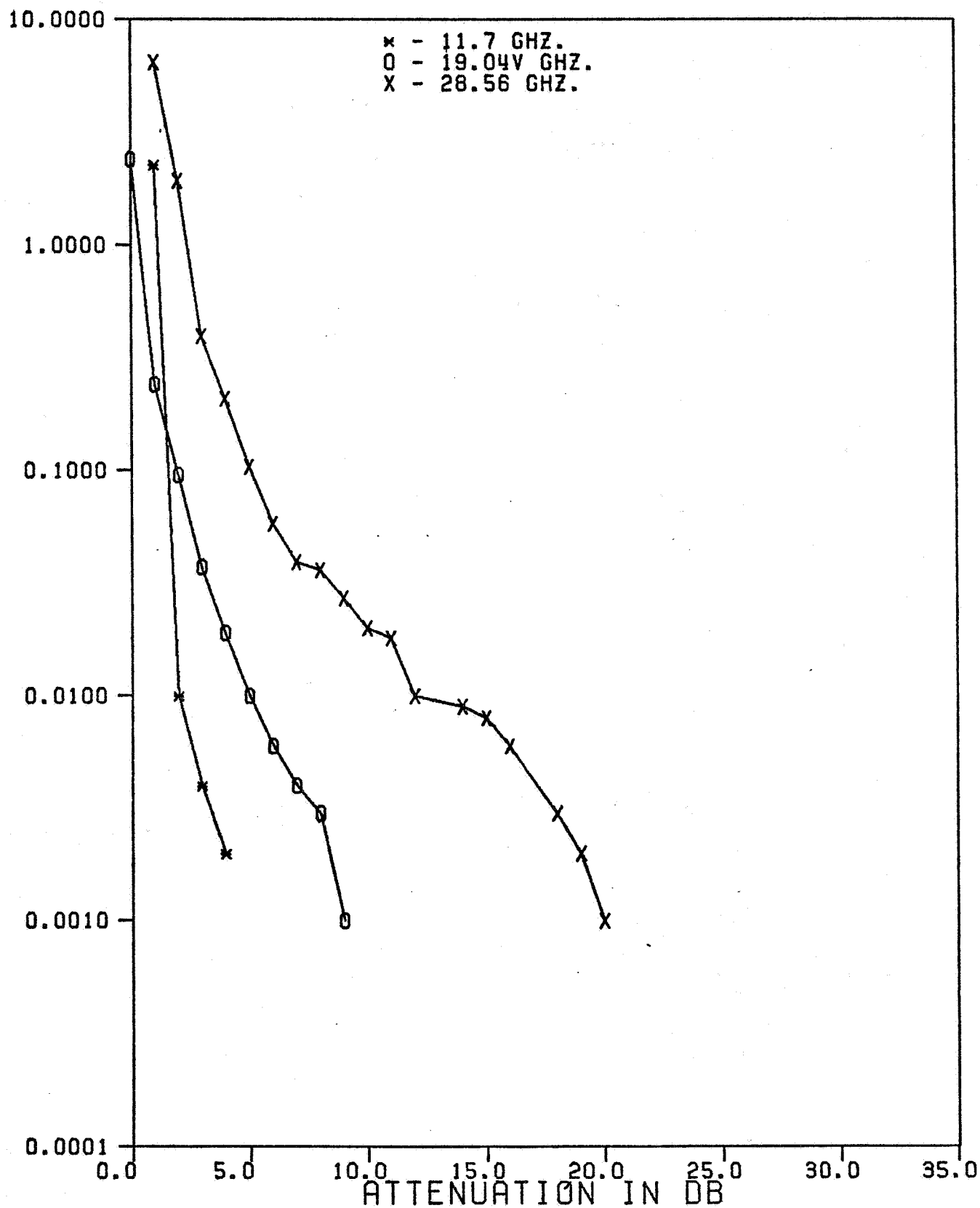


Figure 2.2-23. Attenuation percent of time data for December, 1978.

### 2.3 Quarterly and Annual Data

To produce annual statistics, data for the three months in each calendar quarter were combined to yield quarterly attenuation and rain rate statistics. Quarterly data were combined to generate half-year data for the warm months (April through September) and the cold months (January, February, March, October, November, and December). The two half-year data bases were then combined to yield the annual percent-of-time plots for rain rate and attenuation shown in Figures 2.3-1 and 2.3-2.

Exact interpretation of the 28.56 GHz data in Figure 2.3-2 is impossible because observations at a low elevation angle (24.5 degrees) have been merged with those from higher elevation angles (44 and 46 degrees). Since attenuation decreases with increasing elevation angle, it is safe to assume that Figure 2.3-2 represents worst-case 1978 annual data for a 28.56 GHz satellite path at 46 degrees elevation.

VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP  
RAIN DATA FOR THE YEAR OF 1978

PERCENT OF TIME RAIN RATE IS EXCEEDED

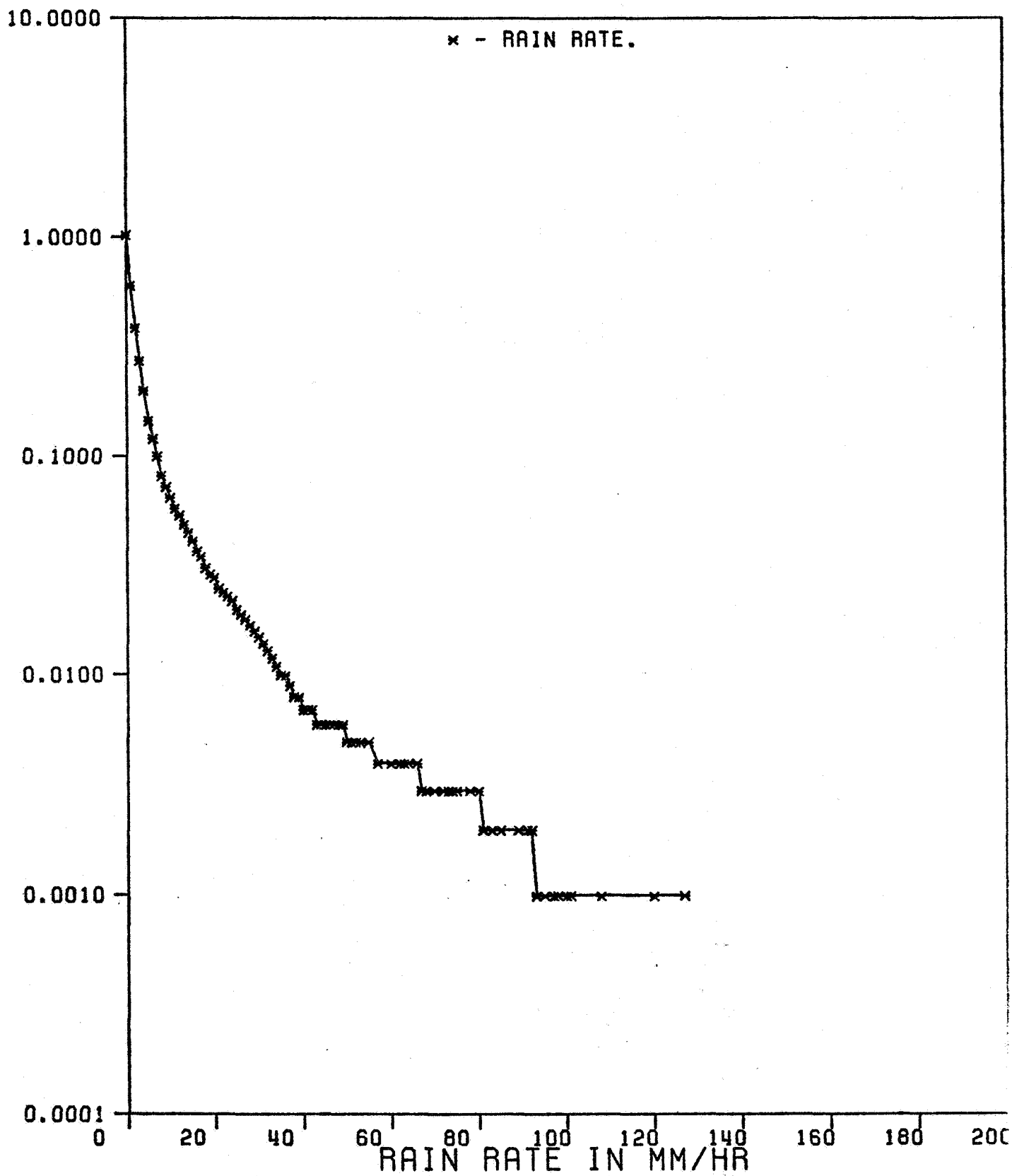


Figure 2.3-1. Rain rate percent of time data for calendar year 1978.

# VPI AND SU SATELLITE GROUP ATTENUATION DATA FOR THE YEAR OF 1978

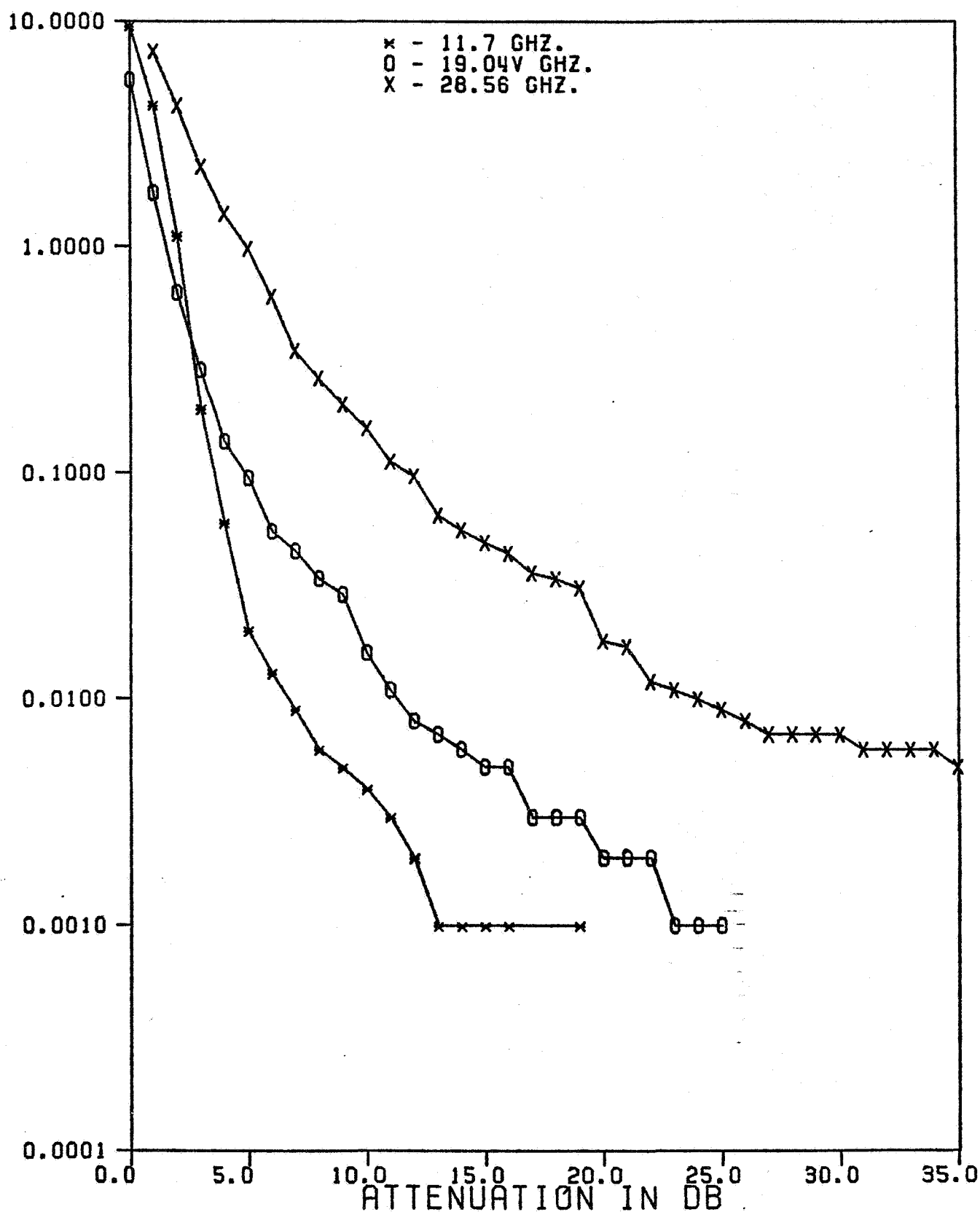


Figure-2.3-2. Attenuation percent of time data for calendar year 1978.

## 2.4 Attenuation Summary

Table 2.4-1 through 2.4-3 give the percentages of time that attenuations of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 dB were equalled or exceeded for each month (except January) and for the 1978 calendar year. While the January data are included in the yearly total, they are not compared with the other months because the January data span only a few hours.

Table 2.4-1. Percentages of Time that Selected Attenuations were Equalled or Exceeded in 1978 at 11.7 GHz.

Attenuation, dB	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	Y
5	**	*	.037	*	.027	.030	.071	.034	.024	*	*	*	.0203
10	**	*	*	*	.004	*	.013	.019	*	*	*	*	.00343
15	**	*	*	*	*	*	.005	*	*	*	*	*	.000727
20	**	*	*	*	*	*	.002	*	*	*	*	*	.000208
25	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
30	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

\*\* Not available

\* Not observed (i.e. the attenuation never exceeded this value)

Table 2.4-2. Percentages of Time that Selected Attenuations were Equalled or Exceeded in 1978 at 19.04 GHz.

Attenuation, dB	J	F	M	A +	M	J	J	A	S +	O	N	D	Y
5	**	*	.539	.022	.060	.078	.140	.056	.093	.011	.005	.01	.0955
10	**	*	.030	*	.024	.023	.058	.022	.013	.001	*	*	.0157
15	**	*	*	*	.011	.001	.032	.015 (14 dB)	*	*	*	*	.00530
20	**	*	*	*	.004	*	.011	.012	*	*	*	*	.00249
25	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	.004	*	*	*	*	.000935
30	**	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

+ Scaled Data

\* Not Observed (i.e. the attenuation never exceeded this value)

\*\* Not Available

Table 2.4-3. Percentages of Time that Selected Attenuations were Equalled or Exceeded in 1978 at 28.56 GHz.

Attenuation, dB	J	F	M	A	M	J	J +	A	S	O	N	D	Y
5	**	.631	4.79	.808	1.47	.116	.476	1.156	.220	.577	.064	.104	.981
10	**	.002	.781	.188	.106	.053	.186	.211	.103	.005	.007	.020	.159
15	**	*	.212	.005	.046	.029	.108	.047	.053	*	.001 (16 dB)	.008	.0494
20	**	*	.031	*	.025	.018	.073	.018	.014	*	*	.001	.0183
25	**	*	*	*	.017	.005	.054	***	*	*	*	*	.00873
30	**	*	*	*	.010	*	.045	***	*	*	*	*	.00654

\*\*\* No points between 23 and 36 dB

\*\* Not Available

\* Not Observed (i.e. the attenuation never exceeded this value)

+ Scaled



## 2.5 Comparing Attenuation and Rain Rate

The values of attenuation and rain rate equalled or exceeded for the same percentage of time are of particular importance in rain attenuation modeling and prediction. Tables 2.5-1 through 2.5-3 present these for each integer value of observed attenuation for each month, quarter, and half year of 1978 and for the entire year. The reader is cautioned that the 28 GHz data for the third quarter (JAS), for the warm months (W), and for the year (Y) combine observations from paths with significantly different elevation angles.

For a given rain rate, the month-to-month variations in attenuation are smallest at 11.7 GHz and largest at 28.56 GHz. This is to be expected, as a month's data can be significantly biased by a single intense rain cell which passes through the propagation path but misses the rain gauge or vice versa. Since specific attenuation increases strongly with frequency, rain cells which miss the gauge should provide proportionally more effect at 28.56 GHz than at 11.7 GHz.

A common feature of Tables 2.5-1 through 2.5-3 is the persistence of several dB attenuation at low (1-2 mm/hr) rain rates. This could result from (1) local terrain features guiding some storm cells so that they cross the path but bypass the rain gauges, (2) diurnal signal fluctuations due to orbital motion of the satellites, or (3) both of the above. Since our earth station employs programmed antenna pointing at 11.7 GHz and fixed-pointing at 19.04 and 28.56 GHz (rather than the autotrack used at some stations), some orbital signal variation is unavoidable. At best this represents about 2 dB peak-to-peak

clear weather signal change in 24 hours and occasionally reaches 4 to 6 dB. We have minimized the effect by calculating attenuation from the mean signals for each month (except for January where the short data period permitted peak values were used), but it cannot be eliminated entirely.

RR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	JFM	AMJ	JAS	OND	W	C	Y
1			3	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	1		2	2		2	2	
2	1								3				3			2			
3			4															3	
4																			3
5													4						
6						2													
7	2							2	3									4	
8			5*			3													
9															3				
10	3																3		
11							3												4
12				3		4								3					
13								3				3							
14									4		4*		5						
15								4		4*						3			
16	4																		
17																			
18								6	5						4				
19																	4		
20				3*															
21						5		7		5								5*	
22																			
23							4	8						4	5				
24				4															
25																			5
26												2				4	5		
27						6													
28							5		6*						6				
29								9											
30					4														
31														5			6		
32							6	10											6
33				5							5			6	7				
34					5														
35							7					3*							
36	5																7		7*
37																			
38			6										6*		8				
39					6				7										
40	8*					7*							8						
41																			
42														7*					
43																			
44						8													
45					7														
46																			
47												4						6	
48																	8*		8
49															9				
50																			

Table 2.5-1 (continued). 1978 11.7 GHz Equal Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W = warm = April - September; C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

[illegible]

Table 2.5-1 (continued). 1978 11.7 GHz Equal Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W - warm = April - September, C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

[illegible]

Table 2.5-2. 1978 19.04 GHz V Equal-Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W = warm = April - September; C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

[illegible]

Table 2.5-2 (continued). 1978 19.04 GHz V Equal-Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W = warm = April - September; C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

[illegible]

[illegible]



Table 2.5-3. 1978 28.56 GHz V Equal-Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W = warm = April - September; C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

	← D2				→ ← D1 →				← D3 →				→ D2		D2	D3			
RR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	JFM	AMJ	JAS	OND	W	C	Y
1	3		7	10	7	2	4	9	6	5	2	2	7	8	8	3	7	6	6
2	4					4											8		
3			12				5		9			3	10			4	9	7	
4	5		14		8		6	12		6	3	4	12		9		8	9	
5	6			12		7	7	14					10	10	10	4	10	11	10
6	7											5	14						
7	8					9	8		10		4		17	11	11	6	11	12	11
8	9					10			11		5						13	12	
9	10		20		9			16	12	7*	6	6			12			18	13
10																			
11	12					11	9		13	8	7		20*		13*		12		14
12							10		14										
13				13	10		11		15		9	7	21		14	7			15
14							12					8				8	13		
15				14*		12	13			9				12		9			
16	17			15	11							9					14		16
17	19							17	17						15	10			18
18	20							17	18			10		13	16		15		19
19												11				11*		20	
20				16	12		14							14				21*	
21	22						16			11	10*						16		
22	23				14	15			19						17				
23								18	21					15					
24				17											18		17		
25	24					16							23						
26					15		18					12			19		18		
27							19					14*			20	12			20
28						17									21	13			21
29	26					19	21				11		24	16			19		
30					16		22				14	15				15	20		
31					17		23				16			17	22		21		
32					19		24	19					25	19	23			22	
33				19		21			22*		17	16		20	24	17	22	23	
34							28							21	25		23		
35							30							22	28		24		
36	27				20			23						30					24*
37					21		34				18			23	33	18	25	24	
38			22*			24*		36							34		26		
39							35		25						35		28		
40	29*							54					26		36		29	25	28
41						25								24*			30		
42					23		37						27			38	32		30
43																			
44						26								25			33		
45																	34		31
46					24		38							26	39				33
47							39					19				19			34
48					26									27			35*		
49					27										41				
50															44		36		

Table 2.5-3 (continued). 1978 28.56 GHz V Equal-Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W = warm = April - September; C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

	D2					D1			D3				D2		D2		D3		
RR	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	JFM	AMJ	JAS	OND	W	C	Y
51								57						28	46		37		
52							44										38		
53												20				20		26	
54																			
55						28											39		37
56																			
57												25				25		27	
58																			
59																			
60					29												41		
61																			
62																	43		41
63			26										29	29				29	43
64					31									31			44		44
65																			
66																	46		
67					35*												47		47
68					36									35					
69																			
70																			
71																			
72														36					
73					41														
74														41					
75																			
76																			
77																			
78															49				
79																			
80					47														
81														47			49		49
82																			
83															53				
84																			
85							49								54		50		50
86																			
87																			
88																			
89															57		54		54
90																			
91							57*	62											
92								65*							61		57		57
93															62		62		62
94																			
95								70							63				
96																			
97																	65		65
98								74											
99															70				70
100								78									70		70

Table 2.5-3 (continued). 1978 28.56 GHz V Equal-Probability Attenuation and Rain Rate Values by the Month, Quarter, Half Year (W = warm = April - September; C = cold = January - March and October - December), and Year. A \* indicates the first attenuation below the .01% level.

[illegible]

### 3. ISOLATION

During 1978 we collected nearly equal amounts of isolation and attenuation data. Work is presently in progress on the isolation statistics, and these will be presented at a later time.

A question of general interest is the extent to which isolation data and statistics may be inferred from attenuation measurements alone. One approach taken by several groups has been to look at theoretical or empirical equations of the form

$$I = U - V \log_{10} (A)$$

where I and A are simultaneous decibel values of isolation and attenuation. Our experience has been that sometimes this equation provides an excellent fit to the data and sometimes it does not; there is considerable month-to-month variation that is as yet unexplained. Table 3-1 presents the least-square fit U, V values that we obtained at each frequency for each month in 1978 along with information on the number of points used and the goodness of the fit obtained (R-squared). We are continuing to study the relationship between isolation and attenuation and will present a detailed report on it in the future.

Table 3-1. Results of least-square fitting  $I = U - V \log_{10}(A)$  to 1978 isolation and attenuation data. Except where noted, values are for  $3 < A < 30$  dB. The quantity  $R^2$  indicates goodness of fit (1.0 indicates a perfect fit) and  $P$  is the number of data points used in the analysis.

Month	11.7 GHz				19.04 GHz V				19.04 GHz H				28.56 GHz			
	U	V	$R^2$	P	U	V	$R^2$	P	U	V	$R^2$	P	U	V	$R^2$	P
J	30.57	1.71	.00	99	36.16	9.54	.14	331	30.32	14.96	.24	2157	35.02	1.75	.01	1187
F*	33.55	-11.63	.00	2471	19.53	26.96	.13	2515	12.45	-2.35	.00	4534	39.87	21.34	.46	4589
M	35.74	18.13	.47	3667	28.52	6.42	.08	255	20.48	7.29	.02	2731	41.64	26.83	.54	10350
A	25.33	-.17	.00	87	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	**	27.86	-3.06	.11	2761
M	28.14	5.69	.03	1420	23.51	-3.62	.02	85	19.73	12.55	.13	41	31.55	3.67	.04	6991
J	36.70	15.51	.61	61	20.42	-3.50	.01	154	24.55	11.87	.14	193	38.39	12.05	.19	189
J	28.22	8.04	.11	1255	36.88	10.67	.28	277	28.56	16.41	.58	191	**	**	**	**
	43.23	21.96	.80	74	(5 < A < 30)											
A	39.73	18.79	.70	38	30.77	-.50	.00	127	15.84	-.30	.00	2913	**	**	**	**
S	62.05	50.54	.62	146	36.88	7.92	1.00	12	17.16	3.04	.06	1326	23.56	3.66	.06	1895
O	35.87	17.64	.21	292	27.71	4.10	.02	445	27.04	10.39	.27	1332	29.59	3.18	.01	3537
N	4.92	-35.32	.16	1115	38.30	12.46	.87	22	33.12	20.12	.95	5	24.13	-9.58	.07	589
D	42.13	24.91	.37	8	43.82	17.85	.37	78	32.40	19.48	.37	89	28.55	.59	.00	1690

\* No rainfall.

\*\* No data collected.

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